

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
TEN YEAR TRANSPORTATION
IMPROVEMENT PLAN

2005–2014



GACIT
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

(Approved By GACIT On December 3, 2003)

PREPARED BY THE
NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NOVEMBER 2003

~ PUBLIC NOTICE ~

Pursuant to RSA 228:99 and RSA 240, the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT), (which is composed of the five Executive Councilors and the Commissioner of the New Hampshire Department of Transportation), announces that Public Hearings will be held to review and receive input on the Department of Transportation's recommended update of the State's Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan (2005-2014).

The purpose of these Public Hearings is to receive public comments/testimony on the projects and materials included in the draft 2005-2014 Ten-Year Transportation Improvement Plan as recommended by the New Hampshire Department of Transportation. Those not able to attend the meetings can submit written testimony within 10 days of each of the Public Hearings.

Twenty-one Public Hearings are scheduled statewide as follows:

| Executive Councilor | Date | Time | Town/City | Location |
|---|--------------------|-------------|------------------|---|
| District 5 Councilor David Wheeler | Sept. 29 (Mon.) | 7:00 PM | Milford | Milford Banquet Hall 1 Union Square |
| District 4 Councilor Raymond Wieczorek | Sept. 30 (Tue.) | 7:00 PM | Manchester | Aldermanic Chambers City Hall 1 City Hall Plaza |
| District 1 Councilor Raymond Burton | Oct. 1 (Wed.) | 9:00 AM | Claremont | Claremont City Hall 58 Tremont Street |
| District 1 Councilor Raymond Burton | Oct. 1 (Wed.) | 1:00 PM | Lebanon | Senior Citizen Center 10 Campbell Street |
| District 1 Councilor Raymond Burton | Oct. 1 (Wed.) | 4:00 PM | Littleton | Opera House Cottage & Union Streets |
| District 1 Councilor Raymond Burton | Oct. 1 (Wed.) | 7:30 PM | Groveton | High School Auditorium 38 State Street |
| District 5 Councilor David Wheeler | Oct. 8 (Wed.) | 7:00 PM | Rindge | Rindge Town Meeting House Main Street |
| District 1 Councilor Raymond Burton | Oct. 9 (Thu.) | 9:00 AM | Laconia | Laconia City Hall Room 200A-2 nd floor 48 Beacon Street East |
| District 1 Councilor Raymond Burton | Oct. 9 (Thu.) | 1:00 PM | Lincoln | Lincoln Town Office Community Room 112 Main Street |

| | | | | |
|---|-------------------|---------|----------------|--|
| District 1 Councilor Raymond Burton | Oct. 9 (Thu.) | 4:00 PM | Conway | Conway Town Hall 1634 Main Street |
| District 1 Councilor Raymond Burton | Oct. 9 (Thu.) | 7:30 PM | Berlin | Berlin City Hall Auditorium 168 Main Street |
| District 4 Councilor Raymond Wieczorek | Oct. 15 (Wed.) | 7:00 PM | Hudson | Hudson Town Hall Planning Zoning Room 12 School Street |
| District 4 Councilor Raymond Wieczorek | Oct. 16 (Thu.) | 7:00 PM | Derry | Hood Middle School Library 5 Hood Road |
| District 1 Councilor Raymond Burton | Oct. 17 (Fri.) | 9:00 AM | Plymouth | Plymouth Town Hall-upstairs 6 Post Office Square |
| District 1 Councilor Raymond Burton | Oct. 17 (Fri.) | 1:00 PM | Moultonborough | Moultonborough Town Office 6 Holland Street |
| District 1 Councilor Raymond Burton | Oct. 17 (Fri.) | 3:30 PM | Wolfeboro | Wolfeboro Library-Mtg. Room 259 South Main Street |
| District 2 Councilor Peter Spaulding | Oct. 20 (Mon.) | 7:00 PM | Concord | NHDOT – Room 114 1 Hazen Drive |
| District 2 Councilor Peter Spaulding | Oct. 22 (Wed.) | 7:00 PM | Somersworth | Somersworth High School Cafetorium 11 Memorial Drive |
| District 3 Councilor Ruth Griffin | Oct. 27 (Mon.) | 7:00 PM | Portsmouth | City Hall 1 Junkins Avenue |
| District 3 Councilor Ruth Griffin | Oct. 28 (Tue.) | 7:00 PM | Salem/Windham | Salem High School Auditorium 44 Geremonty Drive |
| District 3 Councilor Ruth Griffin | Oct. 29 (Wed.) | 7:00 PM | Plaistow | Vic Geary Center 18 Greenough Road |

Copies of the draft Ten-Year Transportation Improvement Plan (2005-2014) are available for review on the NHDOT website: www.state.nh.us/dot/public.htm or by contacting the Regional Planning Commissions or the Bureau of Transportation Planning at the Department of Transportation (603 271-3344).

Written Comments should be addressed to:
David J. Brillhart, P.E.
Director of Project Development
New Hampshire Department of Transportation
John O. Morton Building, 1 Hazen Drive
P.O. Box 483
Concord, NH 03302-0483

Any individuals needing assistance or auxiliary communication equipment due to sensory impairment or other disability, should contact Bill Janelle, NHDOT, P.O. Box 483, Concord, N.H. 03302-0483 - TDD access: Relay N.H. 1-800-735-2964. Notification of the need for assistance must be made no later than 7 days before the meeting.

The projects developed through the Ten Year Plan process will be administered according to the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes to ensure non-discrimination.

Executive Councilor Raymond Burton
Chairman, Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT)
Dated at Concord, NH
this 5th day of September 2003

Governor's Advisory Commission
on
Intermodal Transportation (GACIT)
2005-2014 Ten Year Plan Public Hearing

Milford Banquet Hall
1 Union Square
September 29, 2003
7:00 PM

AGENDA

1. Executive Councilor – David Wheeler
 - Welcome and Introductions
2. Regional Planning Commission
 - Regional process
 - Regional priorities
3. NH Department of Transportation
 - Statewide issues
 - Statewide priorities
4. Executive Councilor – David Wheeler
5. Public Comments
6. Executive Councilor – David Wheeler
 - Closing Comments
7. Adjourn

Written Comments should be addressed to:

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P.O. Box 483
Concord, NH 03302-0483

and should be received no later than **October 10, 2003.**

October 6, 2003

Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation
(GACIT)

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

DATE OF HEARING: September 29, 2003
7:00 PM

LOCATION OF HEARING: Milford Banquet Hall
1 Union Square
Milford, NH

SUBJECT: State's Ten-Year Transportation Improvement Plan

ATTENDEE LIST: David Wheeler, Executive Councilor
Carol Murray, Commissioner, NHDOT
Jeff Brillhart, Director of Project Development, NHDOT
Andrew Singelakis, Executive Director, NRPC

See Attached List

Executive Councilor David Wheeler opened the Public Hearing at 7:08 PM and explained that it is the first of 21 public hearings by the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT). Councilor Wheeler noted that the NHDOT has done a good job in prioritizing projects and presenting a great deal of information in a useable manner. Councilor Wheeler recognized Simon Thomson representing Senator John Sununu's office. Mr. Thomson encouraged the public to contact him with any questions at the federal level.

Councilor Wheeler introduced Andrew Singelakis, Executive Director Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) to discuss the planning process. Mr. Singelakis explained that the NRPC covers twelve communities and is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in the Nashua area. Mr. Singelakis continued by saying that as an MPO, NRPC is responsible for developing the region's long-range plan and is involved at the conceptual level of projects. In producing corridor plans recently for NH 101 and 101A, for example, NRPC addressed safety and capacity issues, and identified specific improvements for inclusion in the Ten Year Plan. Town-specific studies are also completed at this level, such as the Nashua Broad Street Parkway terminus study that is looking at reducing the proposed highway from four lanes to two lanes. The Commission's Transportation Advisory Committee prioritizes projects in the region. This list of priorities then goes to the State. Mr. Singelakis added that Commuter Rail is still a high priority, as is the proposed widening of the F. E. Everett Turnpike through the Town of Merrimack. Mr. Singelakis stated that a new interchange (Exit 36) on the Turnpike is a high regional priority and was not included in the

Ten Year Plan. Mr. Singelakis summarized the process by stating that NRPC sent solicitation to all communities, developed regional priorities and submitted them to the Department.

Councilor Wheeler recognized the Regional Planning Commission as the starting point in the Ten Year Plan process and thanked Mr. Singelakis for that role. Councilor Wheeler noted that the process works. Councilor Wheeler then introduced NHDOT Commissioner Carol Murray. Commissioner Murray noted that as a result of one of the studies completed by the NRPC and supported by the Towns, \$1 million has been added to the NH 101 corridor project to jumpstart the process and develop engineering for the corridor. Commissioner Murray commented on the importance of establishing communication between local officials, RPCs and the public to ensure that the Ten Year Plan reflects the State's needs. Commissioner Murray explained that this update of the Ten Year Plan has been difficult as project costs have increased and available funding has not increased as projected in past Ten Year Plans. The draft Plan contains updated project estimates and realistic financial projections. Commissioner Murray noted that New Hampshire's transportation infrastructure is aging and the Department recommends more funding to preserve the existing system. Councilor Wheeler complimented the NHDOT for its honest approach to the Ten Year Plan. He noted that Executive Council District 5 has done very well by the Ten Year Plan process.

Councilor Wheeler opened the hearing to public comment.

Noreen O'Connell, Milford Board of Selectmen, expressed concern with the time line for installing rumble strips and reflectors along NH 101. Commissioner Murray said that the contract has been approved. Commissioner Murray agreed to send the project schedule to the Select Board.

Bud McEntee, Lyndeborough, said that Center Road carries a sizeable amount of traffic (1200 vehicles per day) and yet the road is considered a secondary, low priority road. Mr. McEntee questioned if money is available for only numbered routes or if money could be spent on low-priority roads that carry local traffic. Commissioner Murray responded that a part of the State's gas tax is made available to cities and towns for assistance with local roadways. Commissioner Murray noted that statewide growth is, and will continue to be, an issue. To better address the issue there needs to be a better partnership between the State, the planning commissions, and the communities. Commissioner Murray said that as part of the State's Long Range Transportation Business Plan, these issues will be discussed.

Gary Daniels, Milford Board of Selectmen, questioned what would happen to projects, if the federal money does not come through? Commissioner Murray agreed that there is uncertainty and noted that the Federal Highway Administration is looking at a possible October 1, 2003 shutdown because the current federal highway legislation does not allow for continued funding beyond October 1. Commissioner Murray noted that a shut down is not expected, but instead the currently in place legislation will be extended 5 or 6 months, while new legislation is acted upon. Exactly what will be contained in the new federal legislation is unknown and subject to debate. Currently New Hampshire receives more transportation money than it sends to Washington, while other states like Oklahoma get less. These other states have organized effectively and are trying to change the current distribution formulas. Commissioner Murray noted that there is the possibility that the estimated dollars in the draft Ten Year Plan may not come through. Commissioner Murray explained that the Ten Year Plan estimates are conservative, but if the

revenues are reduced, all projects will be affected. Commissioner Murray also noted that the NH Legislature might give authority to bond the I-93 project, in which case some projects could be advanced. Lastly Commissioner Murray noted that the Ten Year Plan is a fluid document that gets updated every 2 years. The Department will be looking to the Executive Councilors, the Governor, and the Legislature for direction.

Councilor Wheeler announced that there would be another GACIT Public Hearing in District 5 on October 8 in Rindge. He also noted that written comments should be forwarded to the attention of Jeff Brillhart at the NHDOT.

The Public Hearing adjourned at 7:40 PM at which time Councilor Wheeler thanked everyone for coming.

Submitted by: Andrew Singelakis, NRPC

Noted by: Ram Maddali, Subramanian Sharma, Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT

Governor's Advisory Commission
on
Intermodal Transportation (GACIT)
2005-2014 Ten Year Plan Public Hearing

Manchester City Hall
1 City Hall Plaza
September 30, 2003
7:00 PM

AGENDA

1. Executive Councilor – Raymond Wieczorek
 - Welcome and Introductions
2. Regional Planning Commission
 - Regional process
 - Regional priorities
3. NH Department of Transportation
 - Statewide issues
 - Statewide priorities
4. Executive Councilor – Raymond Wieczorek
5. Public Comments
6. Executive Councilor – Raymond Wieczorek
 - Closing Comments
7. Adjourn

Written Comments should be addressed to:

David J. Brillhart, P.E.
Director of Project Development
New Hampshire Department of Transportation
John O. Morton Building, 7 Hazen Drive
P.O. Box 483
Concord, NH 03302-0483

and should be received no later than **October 13, 2003.**

October 2, 2003

Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation
(GACIT)

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

DATE OF HEARING: September 30, 2003
7:00 PM

LOCATION OF HEARING: Manchester City Hall
1 City Hall Plaza
Manchester, NH

SUBJECT: State's Ten-Year Transportation Improvement Plan

ATTENDEE LIST: Raymond Wieczorek, Executive Councilor
Carol Murray, Commissioner, NHDOT
Jeff Brillhart, Director of Project Development, NHDOT
Alaina Bailey, Chief of Project Programming, NHDOT
Moni Sharma, Executive Director, SNHPC

See attached list

Councilor Wieczorek opened the public hearing at 7:20 PM by explaining the Ten Year Plan process and the need for public input. He noted that the procedure is repeated every two years. He mentioned the other public hearings in Executive Council District 4 will be held on October 15 in Hudson and October 16 in Derry, and that there would be other public hearings statewide. He recognized Jeff Rose, representing Congressman Jeb Bradley office and Will Wroblewski representing Senator John Sununu's office.

Moni Sharma, Executive Director of the Southern NH Planning Commission (SNHPC), then described the regional process that was employed as part of the Ten Year Plan. He noted that RSA 228:29 describes the process and how the plan is initiated by the regional planning commissions and then compiled by the NHDOT; then reviewed at public hearings chaired by GACIT members; and then forwarded to the Governor and then to the Legislature for enactment into law. Because money is very tight, SNHPC cautioned municipalities to not add new projects to the Plan. As a result, only Bedford and Hooksett asked to add one project each. Hooksett asked for improvements to US 3. Bedford asked for a project to improve the NH 101/Hardy Road/Jenkins Road intersection. Both projects were given equal priority by the Commission.

Commissioner Carol Murray then talked about the NHDOT's role in the Ten Year Plan process. She noted these hearings are important to obtain public input. She explained that the process is particularly difficult this time because there are more needs than available funding. To address the situation, the NHDOT first updated cost estimates for all projects in the existing Ten Year Plan. As expected, project costs increased.

Next, the NHDOT reviewed the funding proposed by the Bush Administration, AASHTO and the US Senate for the next Federal Surface Transportation legislation to estimate funding that may be available. Since we now estimate less funding than was projected in the current Ten Year Plan, the draft plan proposes that projects will need to be delayed. Commissioner Murray noted that New Hampshire is still fortunate in getting \$1.06 back for each dollar sent to Washington and she thanked the Congressional delegation for its help in assuring New Hampshire gets its share for important New Hampshire projects. Commissioner Murray stated that New Hampshire has needs in every mode of transportation, which outpace our ability to fund them. She noted that the Northeast has an aging infrastructure, is the most densely populated, and is subject to severe weather conditions. She cautioned that we need to take care to preserve our existing system while we contemplate improvements to it. She praised NHDOT District staff for holding the system together.

Councilor Wieczorek opened the hearing to public comment.

David Danielson, Bedford Town Councilor and representative to the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission, thanked the NHDOT for the good relationship Bedford has with the NHDOT. He asked that the intersection of NH 101 / Hardy Road / Jenkins Road be added to the Plan. He noted that most of the Bedford projects listed in the Plan are on the Interstate system. He said that this proposed project is a serious safety issue. He explained that through the efforts of the Town Council and the NHDOT, Senators Smith and Gregg were able to secure Federal funds of one million for this project. He felt that given the safety issues and the funding made available, the project should be added to the Ten Year Plan. Commissioner Murray stated that it is helpful when a community is able to participate in the funding of a project. Regarding the project for Hooksett, Mr. Danielson stated that this project is also needed for safety and economic development.

Frank Thomas, Manchester Department of Public Works, stated that he supports the Ten Year Plan. He thanked the NHDOT for moving up the railroad crossing project to coincide with the Granite Street project. He urged the NHDOT to reconsider advancing the Park and Ride project, which was programmed for 2005, and now proposed to be moved to 2014. He stated that he knew that the City had asked to put the design on hold due to civic and commercial development. He expects, however, a new site will soon be available, and at that time, the park and ride project should move forward.

Michael Mosher, President of ASCE of New Hampshire, stated his support for the Ten Year Plan. He noted that the widening of I-93 is a major investment. He asked about GARVEE bonds to which Commissioner Murray responded that there has been some discussion relative to bonding the I-93 in an effort to complete the project sooner and free up funding for other projects in the Plan. She said the current estimate for I-93 is \$420M. In the draft Ten Year Plan, construction begins in 2005 with the last project to advertise for construction in 2014. In their last session, the NH House Public Works Committee had looked at GARVEE bonds. If I-93 were bonded, the overall project could be constructed sooner and the last contract could be accelerated to perhaps 2008. GARVEE Bonds involve borrowing against future federal funding allocations, and would include interest debt service. She also pointed out that bonding could save money by allowing the work to be completed earlier thus limiting the impact of inflation. She said that the NHDOT was working with the House Public Works Committee and the State Treasurer, among others.

Jeff Rose of Congressman Bradley's office, thanked the NHDOT for the opportunity to get public input. He stated that Congressman Bradley is aware of the increasing needs in New Hampshire and will work with his counterparts during reauthorization to ensure safe and effective transportation in New Hampshire.

Will Wroblewski, of Senator Sununu's office, thanked the people for attending the meeting, and stated that public input is critical to the process. He said he wanted to learn about the public's priorities, and he noted that Senator Sununu will continue to search for significant funding.

David Smith of Manchester Transit thanked the NHDOT for considering transit, and the Bureau of Rail and Transit for their support. He asked that Senators and Representatives at the Federal level consider transit as an important part of transportation.

Mike Di Bitetto, Chairman of the Hooksett Board of Selectmen, pointed out that there were a number of people from Hooksett at the meeting. He requested that the US 3 project to Martins Ferry be placed in Ten Year Plan. He noted that two projects in Hooksett, at Alice Avenue and at the NH 28 Bypass, are going forward and will help to alleviate problems at both intersections. He said that US 3 is an overwhelming problem for the community and the region. He noted that US 3 serves weekend tourism traffic to the Lakes region, ski areas, and people going to the racetrack, as well as weekday commuters. Mr. Di Bitetto expressed concern that the I-93 widening (which is strongly supported by the town) will exacerbate this problem. He urged the Department to include this Hooksett project.

Robert St. Jean, Hooksett, stated he was currently working on the Master Plan update in Hooksett. He explained that US 3 is the main problem in Hooksett. He thought that sections of the highway need to be prioritized and then improved over time. He mentioned the Granite Street to Manchester city line area. He stated that developers north of that area may contribute to the upkeep of the road. He said that the Town has a plan in place, and in ten years all of the highway should be improved up to the Allenstown town line. He said that the Town is focused on economic development and that there are good opportunities in the Manchester region, provided there is a good transportation system. Mr. St. Jean said he also supports fixing Bedford's NH 101 intersections. He noted that the NH 101 issues have been around longer, but that both Bedford and Hooksett need their projects added to the Ten Year Plan. Mr. St. Jean mentioned that the project to rehabilitate the rest area, on I-93, in Hooksett is of little help to Hooksett. He questioned whether the money for the rest areas could be better spent to foster economic development and job creation.

Charles Watson, Town Planner for Hooksett, agreed with all that had been said relative to US 3 through Hooksett. He went on to discuss the Ten Year Plan process. He said that he had been to many Ten Year Plan meetings, and he understands the difficulty in prioritizing state needs. He thought that it would be helpful if the press let people know the depth of the problem and the worsening condition of the State's transportation infrastructure. He thought it was critical to address this before it became a crisis. He agreed that it would make the NHDOT's job easier if a town is willing to participate in funding a particular project. He said that the people of Hooksett realize they have to do their share. He felt that with more match money, more Federal money could be made available. He said that the draft Plan is

really a 15-year plan. He noted that it is difficult not knowing when projects will happen. He hoped that processes could be improved so that important projects can happen in a timely manner.

Steve Korzyniowski, Chair of the Hooksett Master Plan Update Committee, explained his concern about economic development in Hooksett. He said that Hooksett has experienced a 30% increase in growth over the last 10 years. He thought the growth could be 50% in the next 10 years. A great deal of development is planned in Hooksett. He said that there are problems on Route 3A, especially with truck traffic. He said he lives on 3A, so he experiences it every day. He explained that traffic is heavy in Hooksett due to three big projects on the east side. He said people avoid Route 3A by going through Hooksett village. He thought Hooksett is looking for growth at Exit 11, similar to the development at Exit 10, which is of concern. He felt that growth is good, because it brings new jobs. He stated that issues related the entrance to Hooksett Village have been controversial, but urged NHDOT to fix it. He mentioned that this coming weekend the Town is holding a charrette to discuss Hooksett village. He said some of the topics would be the Lilac Bridge, a connector road, and the discontinued bridge around Merrimack Street.

Mary Ruel, Hooksett, stated her support for Hooksett's projects.

Mike Jolin thanked the Councilor and NHDOT for listening. As a representative of the SNHPC, he thought both the Bedford and Hooksett projects are very important. He said that waiting 10 or more years for these projects will be problematic. He stated that traffic was almost unbearable on weekends with people avoiding the I-93 toll. He hoped that these two projects would be considered.

Councilor Wieczorek explained that the process was still unfolding. He appreciates the difficulty of not having enough money for all serious transportation needs in the region, and he hopes these issues can be resolved. He then thanked the people for attending and adjourned the public hearing around 8:30 PM.

Submitted by: Alaina Bailey, NHDOT

Noted by: Bill Cass, Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT

Governor's Advisory Commission
on
Intermodal Transportation (GACIT)
2005-2014 Ten Year Plan Public Hearing

Claremont City Hall
58 Tremont Street
October 1, 2003
9:00 AM

AGENDA

1. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
 - Welcome and Introductions
2. Regional Planning Commission
 - Regional process
 - Regional priorities
3. NH Department of Transportation
 - Statewide issues
 - Statewide priorities
4. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
5. Public Comments
6. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
 - Closing Comments
7. Adjourn

Written Comments should be addressed to:

David J. Brillhart, P.E.
Director of Project Development
New Hampshire Department of Transportation
John O. Morton Building, 7 Hazen Drive
P.O. Box 483
Concord, NH 03302-0483

and should be received no later than **October 13, 2003**.

November 10, 2003

Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation
(GACIT)

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

DATE OF HEARING: October 1, 2003
9:00 AM

LOCATION OF HEARING: Claremont City Hall
58 Tremont Street
Claremont, NH 03743

SUBJECT: State's Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan

ATTENDEE LIST: Raymond Burton, Executive Councilor
Carol Murray, Commissioner, NHDOT
Jeff Brillhart, Director of Project Development, NHDOT
Alaina Bailey, Chief of Project Programming, NHDOT
Jason Rasmussen, Upper Valley-Lake Sunapee RPC

See attached list

Executive Councilor Raymond Burton opened the Public Hearing at 9:00 AM and explained that by law the five members of the Executive Council, along with the NHDOT Commissioner form the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT) and are required to hold public hearings to receive comments from the public on the draft Ten Year Plan. Councilor Burton explained that about a year ago, the regional planning commissions started reviewing and prioritizing projects and sent a prioritized list of projects to the NHDOT. The NHDOT then submitted recommendations to the GACIT committee. Councilor Burton noted that there are eleven public hearings to be held in his District before the end of October. Councilor Burton continued by stating that on November 19, 2003, the GACIT will meet as a whole on the draft Ten Year Plan so that it can be submitted to the Governor in December and then to the Legislature in January for legislative action by July 1, 2004.

Councilor Burton pointed out that these public hearings have been publicized through press releases and advertisements in newspapers, and town selectboards and the NH Congressional Delegation have been notified. Councilor Burton introduced Chris Collins from Senator John Sununu's office and welcomed him to the Public Hearing. He noted that there is a 5-month continuing resolution for the current transportation bill during which time Congress will continue to study the new reauthorization bill. Councilor Burton noted that US Representative Don Young, Chairman of the House Transportation Committee is advocating for a substantial gas tax increase. He further explained that, even though 18 cents of every gallon goes into the Highway Trust Fund, only 65 cents of every dollar of this fund gets used on highways. Councilor Burton also noted that at the state level, the last gas tax increase was

about 15 years ago. That increase passed due in part to support of the Towns and Cities who in turn, received a share of the collected money. Councilor Burton stated that he is in favor of a gas tax increase for the State.

Commissioner Carol Murray noted that this is the first Public Hearing in Councilor Burton's district. Commissioner Murray said that public input is a key element of the Ten Year Plan update process. Commissioner Murray explained that the Ten Year Plan process is particularly difficult this time because there are more needs than available funding. To address the situation, the NHDOT updated cost estimates for all the projects in the existing Ten Year Plan. Commissioner Murray noted that estimates increased. In addition, the current funding available has been less than what was projected in the last update of the Ten Year Plan. Commissioner Murray noted that for this update, more conservative federal funding estimates are proposed based on the latest information out of Washington regarding federal reauthorization. Commissioner Murray explained that for the year 2005 alone, the last update anticipated \$15 million more than what is now expected. She said that through the last three reauthorizations New Hampshire received more money than was sent to Washington, and she hoped that this would continue. She said that Florida, Texas, Oklahoma and 2 others are trying to change the distribution formula to get more money for themselves. She stated that in the past the Northeast states banded together to keep the financial situation as it is now. Commissioner Murray said that our roads are safe, but there is much that needs to be done. She complimented the Districts for holding the system together. She stated, that we need to balance the preservation of the system with upgrades to the system. Commissioner Murray pointed out that the Ten Year Plan process works and creates a stable plan. She said that the key in doing the update is the help of the Regional Planning Commission (RPC) and the communication back to communities.

Councilor Burton stated that there was much money programmed for the I-93 widening. He hopes the legislature will do GARVEE bonds. Eight states have used GARVEE bonds, which provide the opportunity to borrow money and use future Federal aid to pay back the bond. If I-93 were bonded, Councilor Burton explained that some of the money set aside for I-93 in the Ten Year Plan could be freed up for other projects.

Commissioner Murray noted that I-93 is currently estimated at \$420 million and New Hampshire currently receives \$130 million in Federal funds per year. She noted that we do have other projects that need to be done. The NHDOT and State Treasurer are looking into using GARVEE bonds. Commissioner Murray noted that in the draft Ten Year Plan, the last contract for widening I-93 is scheduled to advertise in 2014. Should the I-93 bonding be approved, the last contract could be accelerated to perhaps 2008. Commissioner Murray also explained that, if I-93 were bonded, money for other projects could be made available. She noted that the Legislature has had a mixed reaction to bonding and said that all thoughts on this matter would be appreciated. Commissioner Murray said that Legislature must authorize the issuance of bonds and any bonding bill would likely be debated in the January session. The House committee is to have it's recommendation by December 1st.

Jason Rasmussen, Upper Valley-Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission (UVLSRPC), discussed UVLSRPC's part in the Ten Year Plan process working with communities, and the TAC committee (which included Town representatives, Transit people and at large members) to make recommendations on regional projects to the NHDOT. This process started in

February, when UVLSRPC sent surveys to its constituents to get a sense of the needs in the area. UVLSRPC then worked with NHDOT to prioritize planned projects and balance new needs. He noted that a project scoring criteria system had been used to identify the list of prioritized projects: those currently in the Ten Year Plan, and recommendations for additions to the plan. Mr. Rasmussen recognized that there were funding limitations, but hoped that the region would not lose projects currently in the Ten Year Plan.

Christopher Collins, Senator John Sununu's office, said any comments would be reported back to Senator Sununu, who will assist in the transportation decisions that need to be made. He thanked Councilor Burton for inviting him to the forum. He was hoping to learn the specifics of Ten Year Plan. He noted that anyone with a question or thought for Senator Sununu, write down their name and he will get back to them.

Guy Santagate, Claremont City Manager, stated that this was the first time he had heard about GARVEE bonding. He opined that if you have enough money, you should never bond. He noted that bonding could not be used for operating costs, and that bonding was a pledge of the income stream. He stated that he was fearful of I-93 (though crucial to southern New Hampshire), becoming the New Hampshire's big dig. He stated that if all the funds were directed to this project, it would leave other areas in trouble. He noted that this bond should have a triple A rating, so investigating this avenue sounds rational. Mr. Santagate said that he had a letter from Bruce Temple to submit, and would recap Mr. Temple's statements. Mr. Santagate stated that the Claremont/Newport NH 11 Project (Project# 10433) needs to happen soon. His understanding was that the project was to follow the Washington Street reconstruction, which started in January 2002. He noted that in the current draft Ten Year Plan, the project has been postponed until 2007. He stated that the project was important to the economy of the Upper Valley. He acknowledged the project has Right-of-Way (ROW) issues, as well as funding problems. Commissioner Murray responded that projects are delayed statewide. She stated that this project will be ready to go in the near future, and if funding is available will go. He stated that the Claremont/Newport/Croydon NH 103 and NH 12 Project (Project# 13333) will encourage better traffic flow through Claremont. Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT noted that this was a 2004 resurfacing project but had been delayed. There are a dozen federal resurfacing projects in the 2004 advertising schedule that are programmed in the existing Ten Year Plan, which are currently being sorted out due to financial constraints. He noted that the project will be ready to go if other 2004 projects are delayed. Commissioner Murray noted that with the extension of TEA-21 for five months, Federal monies would most likely be parceled out one month at a time. She noted the table included in the handouts, which shows different versions of the reauthorization bill. Mr. Santagate stated that he had talked to Councilor Burton about an emergency situation on Drapers Corner, which he considers dangerous. He noted this project was in the Ten Year Plan, and then was delayed due to funding and other issues. He stated that the Police and Fire Chief agree that this is a safety issue and one of the most important projects in the area and asked that it be put back in the plan. Commissioner Murray explained that if there was a relatively inexpensive solution, the problem would be addressed sooner.

Councilor Burton mentioned that from time to time, he gathers a list of projects to consider for demonstration projects, and that he has always added Draper's Corner to this list.

David Edkins, of Charlestown, expressed disappointment that the NH 12 project, which includes reconstruction from NH 12A to the town line, had been delayed. He noted in the last two Ten Year Plans, the preliminary engineering (PE) and right-of-way (ROW) were in 2003, 2004 and construction in 2007. In the draft of the Ten Year Plan, the PE and ROW were moved to 2007, and construction moved off the list. He stated that this is a very narrow road and there is no place to pull off disabled vehicles, which makes it a safety concern. He said that he was disappointed to see it gone, when it was ranked so highly by the TAC. Commissioner Murray noted that the importance of NH 12 was highlighted when sections of the road in Westmoreland were lost two times in two weeks due to heavy rains. She also noted that traffic growth in that area is surprising. She reassured Mr. Edkins that NHDOT would take a look at what we can do to get projects in the plan. She noted that if I-93 were bonded, projects like this could be brought back into the Ten Year Plan.

Mark Aldrich, City of Claremont, noted that economic development is dependant on transportation. He said the problem for Claremont, is improving its access to the interstates. Mr. Aldrich noted that the NHDOT has been proactive in working with the city. He stated that Draper's Corner is a safety concern, and he has been sending letters to representatives to ask for Congressional demonstration money. He went on to say that we must have user fees to pay for transportation. He noted that the State is working on Federal reauthorization to ensure that we continue to get more money back than we send (unlike other programs in which New Hampshire is a donor). Mr. Aldrich noted that the Sugar River Mills area is growing and thanked NHDOT and RPC for the 2005 Sugar River pedestrian bridge project. He encouraged communities to communicate with their RPCs about their needs. He stated that he hoped the Sugar River pedestrian bridge project doesn't slip too much. Commissioner Murray stated that it was her understanding that this is a Transportation Enhancement (TE) project, which has dedicated funds. In the draft Ten Year Plan no TE projects were delayed due to financial reasons. Mr. Aldrich called TE a good program. He expressed disappointment that the North Street reconstruction had slipped slightly. Mr. Aldrich again stated that access to I-91 (Vermont) is the most important component of their transportation system.

Aare Ilves, Charlestown Administrative Assistant and UVLSRPC representative, spoke in favor of the NH 12 transportation projects. He said that UVLSRPC had worked hard to maintain the priority of projects and was disappointed that, though the TAC rated the NH 12 project #1, it came out somewhere near the end of the program. He noted that this was the main route from the region to other parts of state. He stated that it was important to have it done now, not in 10 to 15 years. He noted that there were no shoulders to pull off from this road. On another subject, he noted the safety issue related to the guardrail on the riverside of NH 12. He noted that a couple of years ago, a person went through the rail, fell into the river and died. He asked that if reconstruction cannot be done, at least do the guardrails.

Rudy Adler, Lempster, stated that to his recollection the NH 10 project was programmed a number of times. He noted that though this project had financial problems in the past, it is a safety issue. He noted that this road is a major Keene and Newport connection, and Lempster has some municipal projects slated to be done along NH 10. He asked that District 2 talk to the Town about what could be coming for projects in this area in the future. Commissioner Murray stated that Alan Hanscom would be contacting him on this subject.

Councilor Burton noted that comments could be mailed to Jeff Brillhart. He noted that the GACIT would be meeting on November 19th to review the draft Ten Year Plan.

Aare Ilves then asked about the progress of rail service from Boston to Nashua. He suggested that a small percentage of the cost of widening I-93 could make a nice rail system. Commissioner Murray said the Nashua connection is important. She noted the main issue in getting rail to Nashua is using the State's gas tax fund for the Federal match. The trucking industry claims that gas tax money can only be used for highway purposes. She stated that New Hampshire's opinion is that rail takes cars off the road. This issue will be going to Supreme Court. Commissioner Murray stated that she was happy to have this lawsuit so there would finally be a clear decision on this subject. Until then, the project is on hold. She stated that high-speed rail from Boston to Montreal is a great concept but there is the question of feasibility: both economic and public support issues. She noted that we have completed Phase 1 of the High Speed Rail Study, but does not know whether Phase 2 will go forward. Councilor Burton stated it would be good to have a decision on the gas tax made once and for all. He reviewed the distribution of gas tax revenues to various state agencies. He noted that of the \$232 million collected, \$83 million is distributed to agencies other than the NHDOT.

Councilor Burton adjourned the Public Hearing at 11:00 AM.

Submitted by: Alaina Bailey, NHDOT

Noted by: Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT

Governor's Advisory Commission
on
Intermodal Transportation (GACIT)
2005-2014 Ten Year Plan Public Hearing

Lebanon Senior Citizen Center
10 Campbell Street
October 1, 2003
1:00 PM

AGENDA

1. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
 - Welcome and Introductions
2. Regional Planning Commission
 - Regional process
 - Regional priorities
3. NH Department of Transportation
 - Statewide issues
 - Statewide priorities
4. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
5. Public Comments
6. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
 - Closing Comments
7. Adjourn

Written Comments should be addressed to:

David J. Brillhart, P.E.
Director of Project Development
New Hampshire Department of Transportation
John O. Morton Building, 7 Hazen Drive
P.O. Box 483
Concord, NH 03302-0483

and should be received no later than **October 13, 2003**.

October 15, 2003

Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation
(GACIT)

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

DATE OF HEARING: October 1, 2003
1:00 PM

LOCATION OF HEARING: Lebanon Senior Citizen Center
10 Campbell Street
Lebanon NH 03766

SUBJECT: State's Ten-Year Transportation Improvement Plan

ATTENDEE LIST: Raymond Burton, Executive Councilor
Carol Murray, Commissioner, NHDOT
Jeff Brillhart, Director of Project Development, NHDOT
Alaina Bailey, Chief of Project Programming, NHDOT
Jason Rasmussen, Upper Valley Lake Sunapee RPC

See Attached List

Executive Councilor Raymond Burton opened the meeting at 1:00 PM and introduced the elected officials from Lebanon and Chris Collins representing Senator John Sununu's office.

Commissioner Carol Murray, NHDOT stated that this update to the Ten Year Plan is particularly difficult because there are more needs than available funding. She noted that while the cost estimates of projects have gone up, the amount of federal aid expected in the next round of reauthorization is expected to be less. In addition, the funding anticipated in the last update of the Ten Year Plan was overestimated. Commissioner Murray noted for this update, more conservative projections of federal funding are proposed based on the latest information out of Washington regarding federal reauthorization. She stated that many projects had to be moved out in time because of lack of funding. She also explained that the NHDOT is now looking for public input on this plan in an effort to assure that it properly addresses State priorities.

Councilor Burton agreed that public input is critical to the Ten Year Plan update, and that the draft Ten Year Plan is subject to change. He went on to explain that \$420 million from the plan has been programmed for the I-93 widening project from Salem to Manchester. Councilor Burton noted that Commissioner Murray has been working with the Legislature to allow the sale of GARVEE bonds to support the widening of I-93. If I-93 were bonded, funding for that project could be freed up for other projects throughout the state.

Jason Rasmussen, Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission (UVLSRPC), explained the role of the regional planning commissions in the Ten Year Plan process. The

regional planning commissions are a liaison between NHDOT and the public. UVLSRPC started the Ten Year Plan update process by meeting Town and City officials to consider their critical needs and potential projects. UVLSRPC then submitted to NHDOT the most critical projects in their area, for consideration in the draft Ten Year Plan. Mr. Rasmussen noted that safety and community impacts are among the criteria the Commission used in its prioritization. He noted that handout information lists project needs in this region that were submitted from the planning agency to the NHDOT. Commissioner Murray noted that planning commissions are a critical link between NHDOT and the cities and towns they represent.

Councilor Burton noted that at the federal level, US Representative Don Young, Chairman of the House Transportation Committee is advocating for a substantial gas tax increase. He noted that the last state gas tax increase was 15 or so years ago, and he thought that it is time for an increase. He noted that the gas tax money is supposed to go directly to roads and bridges but over the years; some funds have been allocated to other State Agencies. Councilor Burton continued by stating that on November 19, 2003, the GACIT will meet as a whole on the draft Ten Year Plan so that it can be submitted to the Governor in December and then to the Legislature in January for legislative action by July 1, 2004.

Ralph Akins, Mayor of Lebanon, thanked Commissioner Murray for attending the Public Hearing and noted that the bridge reconstruction project between Lebanon and Hartford over the Connecticut River project is scheduled for in 2013, ten years later than what was originally expected. He stated that the Exit 20 project is now scheduled for 2008 and by its completion, all the intersections in the interchange area would fail. He said that the project should be advanced from the year 2008, due to the continued growth that will lead to more congestion in the NH 12A area. He restated that the City requests this project be advanced to 2005.

Roy Howe, Enfield, asked about the bridge across Lake Mascoma. He asked if it was scheduled in 2005 or 2008. He noted that there is a betterment project for bridge painting in 2005 and a bridge replacement project is scheduled for 2007. He suggested that the bridge over the lake should be refurbished instead of replaced.

Tom Linell, Hanover, asked if the scope of the Bath 10425E-Upper Village Bypass Project would be reduced. Mr. Linell asked whether any money saved by reducing the project scope, would be used for other projects in this area. Commissioner Murray noted that soil conditions in the area of the bypass are poor for stabilizing highway embankments. She stated that NHDOT is reviewing the project and gathering public input, so there is no final decision yet as to what the final scope of work will be. She explained that any money saved from this project would go to the next priority project in the plan and does not necessarily stay in the same area. Commissioner Murray noted that statewide, bridges are deteriorating more quickly than we can fix them, and it may be necessary to advance some of these projects. She noted that bridges are typically designed to last for 50 years and many of our bridges are at least 50 years old. Commissioner Murray noted that the NHDOT is developing a prioritized list of problem bridges.

Tom Linell asked about Lebanon to Canaan US 4 corridor study and the Grafton-Canaan 13852 (a 2003 Betterment project). He asked if the shoulders for US 4 could be used by

bicyclists. Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT, said that he believed the proposed shoulders would be wide enough for bicycles, as was requested by the UVLSRPC. Mr. Linell spoke in favor of the US 4 corridor study. He also spoke in support of the Boston to Montreal High Speed Rail Study.

Robert Norman, Hanover, stated that the I-93 congestion seems to be a tourist related issue. He thought that the people who use the interstate should fund the I-93 widening project. He stated that he was also in favor of the rail project from Lowell to Nashua and the High Speed Rail Study. He expressed support for bike paths, noting that bikes could alleviate traffic in Lebanon. He stated that roads in this area are currently too dangerous to bicycle on. He asked that signalized intersections in Hanover be given left turn phases. He expressed support for the bike path along I-89 in this area.

Commissioner Murray noted the signal work could be advanced through the Betterment program. She stated that bicycle paths are a consideration when constructing improvements to roads. She noted that the Transportation Enhancement (TE) program has been kept intact and on schedule in the draft Ten Year Plan. This program is vital for addressing bicycle/pedestrians projects.

Richard Jones, Selectman of Lyme, expressed concern about the delay of the project on the Lyme-Thetford Bridge over the Connecticut River. He stated that these east/ west connections are critical and the project should not be delayed.

Dean Sorenson, Lebanon City Council, expressed a concern regarding the priority given to airport projects. He stated that NH 120 is an important corridor and is heavily congested and should be a higher priority. Councilor Burton noted aeronautic project monies are drawn from the Aviation Trust Fund and can only be used on airport related projects.

Nicole Cormen, Connecticut River Joint Commission, stated that the NH 12A project is a regional issue, which should underline the need to get it done sooner rather than later. She asked to see more support for alternative transportation and park-n-rides. She stated that US 4 and NH 120 need to be addressed. She thought that even when NH 120 is widened to two more lanes, it would still be congested. She suggested constructing a gondola that would carry people from the Exit 20 interchange to the hospital. She expressed concern about the impact on water quality and environmental issues that projects create. She urged NHDOT to work with the locals on the issues.

Dominic Balestra, City Council, Lebanon, stated that Lebanon is the transportation hub for northern New England and there is a need for a coordinated plan, which includes the I-89 bridges that connect New Hampshire to Vermont. He suggested a local bridge between Lebanon and Vermont be considered. He noted that Lebanon has an active airport, railroad, and interstate highway infrastructure and consequently the State should provide funding to Lebanon because of these services. He suggested a tollbooth on I-89 at the State line to fund the NH 12A project.

Shawn Donovan, Upper Valley Transportation Management Association stated he was concerned about traffic growth and congestion. He suggested the NHDOT look for multi-modal alternatives to problems. He supported express bus service and funding for park and

ride lots. He noted that there was only the one park and ride lot in the Upper Valley, located in Lyme. He explained that US 4 and other routes have bus service and would be good locations for park and rides

Clark Griffiths, Lebanon, noted the I-89 Exit 20/NH 12A project would continue with signalized ramp intersections. He stated that this is only a short-term solution. He suggested that if the project is going to be delayed, the interchange be redesigned to provide cloverleaf ramps so the signals could be removed.

Bill Baschnagel, Selectman of Hanover, stated that bonding I-93 is critical and that we cannot take funds from the rest of the state to fund the I-93 project. He stated that a regional planning approach, including both New Hampshire and Vermont, is critical to this area. Corridor studies are critical, as they provide a framework for solutions. Consideration should be given to addressing problems on I-91 and NH 120. We have to be imaginative. Smart growth requires smart solutions.

Leon Kenison, Interim City Manager of Lebanon, noted that as the program changes, projects should stay in the same priority order as in the last round of the Ten Year Plan. He noted that there has been a 33% loss of purchasing power since 1991, which was the year of the last fuel tax increase. He suggested a surcharge to pay for the bond for I-93 widening. He thanked the NHDOT for the aviation project money allocation for Lebanon and also thanked NHDOT for the work on I-89 this year. He noted that the I-89 Sutton section is in poor condition. He also noted the need to keep the Mechanic Street project on schedule. He invited the Commissioner to see these needed projects. For the Exit 20 project he suggested reconsideration of the tunnel to provide traffic with alternatives to NH 12A. He stated that the local TE projects are being worked on. He also asked for a response relative to the project on NH 120 and that the hospital is willing to match the federal money needed for this project.

Van Chesnut, Executive Director of Advance Transit and Chair of Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission's Transportation Advisory Committee, thanked the NHDOT for its work with the RPC. He spoke in favor of transit funding, though he recognizes that there is a funding shortfall.

Susan Almy spoke in favor of raising the gas tax. She agreed that corridor studies are a critical element of the Ten Year Plan process.

Support was expressed for the wildflower program.

Councilor Burton thanked all of the attendees and the adjourned the public hearing at 3:00 pm.

Submitted By: Alaina Bailey, NHDOT

Noted by: Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT

Governor's Advisory Commission
on
Intermodal Transportation (GACIT)
2005-2014 Ten Year Plan Public Hearing

Littleton Opera House
Cottage & Union Streets
October 1, 2003
4:00 PM

AGENDA

1. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
 - Welcome and Introductions
2. Regional Planning Commission
 - Regional process
 - Regional priorities
3. NH Department of Transportation
 - Statewide issues
 - Statewide priorities
4. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
5. Public Comments
6. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
 - Closing Comments
7. Adjourn

Written Comments should be addressed to:

David J. Brillhart, P.E.
Director of Project Development
New Hampshire Department of Transportation
John O. Morton Building, 7 Hazen Drive
P.O. Box 483
Concord, NH 03302-0483

and should be received no later than **October 13, 2003**.

October 7, 2003

Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation
(GACIT)

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

DATE OF HEARING: October 1, 2003
4:00 PM

LOCATION OF HEARING: Littleton Opera House
Cottage & Union Streets
Littleton, NH

SUBJECT: State's Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan

ATTENDEE LIST: Raymond Burton, Executive Councilor
Carol Murray, Commissioner, NHDOT
Jeff Brillhart, Director of Project Development, NHDOT
Michael King, Executive Director, NCC

See Attached List

Executive Councilor Raymond Burton opened the Public Hearing at 4:15 PM and explained that about a year ago, the regional planning commissions (RPCs) started the process of reviewing and prioritizing projects. In May, they sent a prioritized list of projects to the NHDOT and the NHDOT, in turn, developed the draft Ten Year Plan for 2005-2014. Councilor Burton noted that the plan is a draft and is not approved yet. Councilor Burton said that, by law, the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT) is required to hold public hearings to receive comments from the public on the draft Ten Year Plan. Councilor Burton said that there are eleven public hearings in the month of October in his District. Councilor Burton said that on November 19, GACIT would meet to review the public's input and forward the draft Ten Year Plan to the Governor. Councilor Burton noted that in the spring before the Ten Year Plan is enacted into law, public hearings will be held at the Legislature. Councilor Burton noted the Ten Year Plan includes highway, aviation, railroad, and public transit projects. Councilor Burton said that federal demonstration projects were among the projects in the Plan. Councilor Burton said that he had invited the Congressional Delegation to attend the public hearings and introduced Simon Thomson from Senator John Sununu's office. Mr. Thomson stated he was there to support the region and answer any questions the citizens may have.

Councilor Burton pointed out that at the federal level US Representative Don Young, Chairman of the House Transportation Committee is advocating for a gas tax increase of about 5 cents. Councilor Burton stated he too is in favor of a gas tax increase for the State. Councilor Burton noted that Commissioner Carol Murray has been working with the legislature to allow the sale of GARVEE bonds as needed to widen I-93 from Salem-Manchester. If I-93 were bonded, Councilor Burton explained the money set aside for that

project in the Ten Year Plan could be freed up for other projects. Councilor Burton felt that the House, Senate and the Governor might endorse the concept.

Councilor Burton introduced Michael King from the North Country Council (NCC) Regional Planning Commission. Mr. King said that the outreach process with NHDOT is a continuous process. He explained that the Regional Transportation Committee for the North Country Council is made up of representatives of the region who review and prioritize North Country transportation projects for the Ten Year Plan. Mr. King noted that the Transportation Committee verified current funding constraints, and proposed that no new projects be added to the Plan.

Councilor Burton noted that the draft Ten Year Plan is not final and will not be until Legislative approval. Councilor Burton said this is the first step in the public input process, and then explained the different opportunities citizens had to influence the Ten Year Plan including speaking up at GACIT meetings. Councilor Burton noted that the GACIT very seldom advanced projects out of order in fairness to others waiting in line. Councilor Burton said that if projects are added now, they should be added to the end of the Ten Year Plan. Councilor Burton noted that based on past experience, the Governor and Legislature will make few if any changes to the Plan. Councilor Burton encouraged people to voice their concerns this evening and/or send comments to Jeff Brillhart at the NHDOT. Councilor Burton explained that aviation projects are pretty well locked into place due to the fact that there is funding set aside for aviation projects. Councilor Burton discussed briefly that Congress was at a stand still with the federal transportation budget and how this affects the Ten Year Plan process. Councilor Burton said that there are about 140 projects in the North Country Council area. Councilor Burton noted that New Hampshire's transportation systems were among the oldest in the country and in his opinion it is the citizen's responsibility to make sure the State's federal delegation has the right information and understands the needs in the New England area. He expressed concern that a larger share of federal funding could be directed to the southern states.

Councilor Burton then opened the meeting up for questions and comments and asked Greg Placy, NHDOT District 1 Engineer, if he would tell the group about projects that are coming up. Mr. Placy explained that with the amount of funding in the plan, it will be difficult to maintain the condition of the roads in the North Country. Mr. Placy noted that he is working on a pavement program that involves about \$1.6 million per year. Mr. Placy stated the only projects in the North Country for 2004–2005 are paving projects. In 2006 there is a bridge project in Colebrook and possibly a bridge project in Monroe. Mr. Placy noted that there has been some discussion relative to the Bath-Lisbon bypass project, but that no matter what happens with the bypass there are other improvement projects that need to be done in the area and if the bypass goes away, the funding should not go with it. Mr. Placy commented that a US 302 guardrail project is coming up.

Citizens acknowledged the paving on I-93 and thanked the NHDOT for doing it. Mr. Placy said that there are different types of paint striping that are being tested in that area in terms of the paint's ability to stand up to plows and constant travel. Walter Johnson from Lisbon echoed Mr. Placy's concern for the bypass project stating the money should stay in the North Country no matter the outcome of the planning process. Mr. Johnson also stated Parker Hill

should be finished since it was started last year. He was also in favor of the guardrail improvement project on US 302 from NH 117 north.

Then citizens expressed concern and asked questions regarding improvements in Littleton and in particular Main Street. A gentleman asked about truck traffic downtown and what was being done to alleviate it. Commissioner Murray explained options were being looked at through Littleton's TCSP planning process. Mr. Placy suggested the truck companies be notified of changes to truck routes. He noted that some signs have been changed. Councilor Burton then asked Jason Hoch, Littleton Town Manager, to report on the TCSP project. Mr. Hoch stated Littleton and its consultant, Project for Public Spaces (PPS), are working on the TCSP project. Mr. Hoch noted that the planning process should be completed in 2004 with construction beginning in 2005. Citizens also asked about bump outs along US 302 and/or flashing lights to slow traffic down. Mr. Cullen commented on the traffic study done on Cottage Street and how it revealed that 70% of the traffic is exceeding the speed limit. Mr. Hoch explained these studies were ongoing, and evaluation and experimentation through the TCSP study would continue to find the best solution to Littleton's traffic and speed issues.

Reagan Pride, Lisbon, stated that he had discussed with Stacey Doll, Regional Transportation Planner for the North Country Council, regarding transit service between Lisbon and Littleton and a possible connection to Haverhill and Bethlehem. Commissioner Murray agreed that it is time to start thinking about rural public transportation. Ms. Doll commented a group has been formed - the North Country Transportation Committee - that is working on the first fixed route from Littleton to Lancaster with the idea that the plan will expand over time to include other towns. Ms. Doll also explained the grassroots initiative is starting in Littleton to coordinate public transportation and how Littleton and the Littleton to Lancaster route will be used as a model for other routes and towns for rural public transportation. Commissioner Murray explained her conversations with the new Health and Human Services (H&HS) Commissioner on the importance of coordinating public transportation efforts between the two agencies.

Councilor Burton ended the Public Hearing at about 5:10 PM by inviting everyone to send their comments and questions to Jeff Brillhart at NHDOT, at the address on the bottom of the agenda.

Submitted by: Stacey Doll, NCC

Noted by: Ram Maddali, Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT

Governor's Advisory Commission
on
Intermodal Transportation (GACIT)
2005-2014 Ten Year Plan Public Hearing

Groveton High School Auditorium
38 State Street
October 1, 2003
7:30 PM

AGENDA

1. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
 - Welcome and Introductions
2. Regional Planning Commission
 - Regional process
 - Regional priorities
3. NH Department of Transportation
 - Statewide issues
 - Statewide priorities
4. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
5. Public Comments
6. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
 - Closing Comments
7. Adjourn

Written Comments should be addressed to:

David J. Brillhart, P.E.
Director of Project Development
New Hampshire Department of Transportation
John O. Morton Building, 7 Hazen Drive
P.O. Box 483
Concord, NH 03302-0483

and should be received no later than **October 13, 2003.**

October 7, 2003

Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation
(GACIT)

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

DATE OF HEARING: October 1, 2003
7:30 PM

LOCATION OF HEARING: Groveton High School Auditorium
38 State Street
Groveton, NH

SUBJECT: State's Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan

ATTENDEE LIST: Raymond Burton, Executive Councilor
Carol Murray, Commissioner, NHDOT
Jeff Brillhart, Director of Project Development, NHDOT
Michael King, Executive Director, NCC

See Attached List

Executive Councilor Raymond Burton opened the Public Hearing at 7:30 PM and explained that by law the five members of the Executive Council, along with the NHDOT Commissioner form the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT) and are required to hold public hearings to receive comments from the public on the draft Ten Year Plan. Councilor Burton stated that through a two year planning cycle, the regional planning commissions (RPCs) have worked with communities, developed regional priorities and submitted their suggestions to the NHDOT. The NHDOT then submitted recommendations to the GACIT committee. Councilor Burton noted that there are eleven public hearings to be held in his District before the end of October and he encouraged the public to submit written comments by the end of October to Jeff Brillhart at the NHDOT. Councilor Burton continued by stating that on November 19, 2003, the GACIT will meet as a whole on the draft Ten Year Plan so that it can be submitted to the Governor in December and then to the Legislature in January for legislative action by July 1, 2004.

Councilor Burton pointed out two issues regarding funding that could impact all transportation projects. One is the issue of gas taxes. US Representative Don Young, Chairman of the House Transportation Committee is advocating for a substantial gas tax increase. Councilor Burton stated that he is in favor of a gas tax increase for the State. The other issue is the bonding of I-93, which is under consideration at the State level. If I-93 were bonded, funding programmed for that project could be freed up for other projects. With that, Councilor Burton introduced Commissioner Carol Murray.

Commissioner Murray thanked the group for coming and said it was important for the NHDOT to hear their concerns. Commissioner Murray explained that the Ten Year Plan process is particularly difficult this time because there are more needs than available funding. To address the situation, the NHDOT updated cost estimates for all projects in the existing Ten Year Plan. Commissioner Murray noted that estimates increased. In addition, the funding available has been less than expected in the last update of the Ten Year Plan. Commissioner Murray explained that for 2005 alone, the last update anticipated \$15 million more than what we now expect. Commissioner Murray noted that for this update, more conservative projections are proposed based on the latest information out of Washington regarding federal reauthorization. Commissioner Murray said that based on current project estimates and expected funding, the NHDOT had to move projects out in time, to balance available monies and project needs. Commissioner Murray said that because of the age of its transportation infrastructure, the extreme weather conditions, and population density, the northeast region has great transportation needs. Commissioner Murray noted that this draft Ten Year Plan reflects the need to preserve the existing system. Commissioner Murray also explained that, if I-93 were bonded, money for other projects could be made available.

Councilor Burton then introduced Michael King, Executive Director of the North Country Council (NCC). Mr. King explained the partnership NCC has with the NHDOT and how the Transportation Committee, which is made up of local representatives, is NCC's way of getting public input on transportation issues. Mr. King explained it was the Committee's responsibility to review and prioritize projects for the Ten Year Plan. Mr. King said that due to the funding constraints, the Committee held off adding new projects and decided to review and prioritize projects already included in the Ten Year Plan. Commissioner Murray stated the regional planning commissions are the key to the planning process as they serve as a conduit between the communities and NHDOT. She also noted this is the first time that the RPCs are part of the GACIT Public Hearing presentation. Commissioner Murray thanked RPCs for their continued help.

Councilor Burton then opened up the public hearing for questions and comments. Bruce Sloat, citizen of Northumberland and a member of North Country Council Transportation Committee, said that he is in support of increasing the gas tax and in support of the US 2 projects that were a high priority on the Transportation Committee's list. Mr. Sloat asked the status of the Stratford, NH – Maidstone, VT Bridge project. Commissioner Murray explained that the funding issue was addressed and then they ran into design issues. Greg Placy, NHDOT District 1 Engineer, explained that the New Hampshire abutment was deteriorating toward the river and to fix the problem the bridge was moved ten feet into New Hampshire. Mr. Placy noted that the project advertised September 17, 2003 and is going forward.

Mr. Sloat then stated his continued concern for signage in Franconia Notch at former Exit 3, which doesn't properly address the Cannon Mountain Ski Area. The signs in the Notch announce the Tramway, but not the ski area, which he feels, is just as important. Commissioner Murray said she would follow up with the NHDOT Traffic Bureau. Commissioner Murray stated that the NHDOT would need to work closely with Dick Hamilton of White Mountain Attractions. Councilor Burton suggested there should be a sign for the ski museum, and Mr. Placy responded that he thought that there is already signage to this effect. Mr. Sloat said that there should not be signage to the Old

Man of the Mountain, and Commissioner Murray responded that until the Old Man Commission makes recommendations, no changes would be made.

Mr. Sloat questioned the reason for leaving abandoned bridge structures in place, such as the General Sullivan bridge in the Portsmouth area. Commissioner Murray stated that it has been general practice to keep all bypassed historic bridges for at least ten years before taking them down. Commissioner Murray explained that if a bridge has a historic designation, then the bridge cannot be taken down unless there are safety or cost issues with leaving them in place. Commissioner Murray noted that we are working with the Division of Historic Resources and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) regarding a policy to remove bypassed historic bridges. In essence, such bridges would be left in place unless they become a safety hazard, attractive nuisance, or otherwise a problem. At that time, the bridge would be reviewed with the local community, and unless the local community is willing to participate in funding the bridge's rehabilitation and take responsibility for long term maintenance, the bridge will be removed. Jeff Brillhart explained that in the case of a historic bridge in Landaff, nobody wanted the bridge and the contract was advertised to demolish the bridge. Mr. Brillhart continued that in Shelburne, the town wants to keep the historic bridge and rehabilitate it for future recreation and historic purposes. Mr. Brillhart noted that NHDOT is working with the Town of Shelburne, as the Town will be coming up with a long-term use and maintenance plan. Mr. Brillhart stated that the bridge will be moved this fall or winter to the shore, while the town raises the 20% matching funds for the future rehabilitation of the bridge. Mr. Brillhart noted that the state will wait up to 2 years for the town to come up with the matching 20% funds and if the matching funds cannot be raised, the bridge will be taken away. Stacey Doll, NCC explained she is part of the Shelburne Bridge committee tasked to come up with a long-term plan for the bridge. Ms. Doll continued that the Town is applying for funding through various grants to implement this plan, and is also working on a long-term maintenance plan. A citizen asked who was liable for the bridges. Commissioner Murray said that it is the state responsibility and it can be a problem when a bridge is deteriorating and becoming a safety concern. Commissioner Murray noted that before the Landaff Bridge could be brought down, maintenance was needed to keep it together.

Mary Sloat, Northumberland, asked if the issue of bonding was discussed and Councilor Burton said it was.

Councilor Burton ended the Public Hearing at 8:20 PM.

Submitted by: Stacey Doll, NCC

Noted by: Ram Maddali, Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT

Governor's Advisory Commission
on
Intermodal Transportation (GACIT)
2005-2014 Ten Year Plan Public Hearing

Rindge Town Meeting House
Main Street
October 8, 2003
7:00 PM

AGENDA

1. Executive Councilor – David Wheeler
 - Welcome and Introductions
2. Regional Planning Commission
 - Regional process
 - Regional priorities
3. NH Department of Transportation
 - Statewide issues
 - Statewide priorities
4. Executive Councilor – David Wheeler
5. Public Comments
6. Executive Councilor – David Wheeler
 - Closing Comments
7. Adjourn

Written Comments should be addressed to:

David J. Brillhart, P.E.
Director of Project Development
New Hampshire Department of Transportation
John O. Morton Building, 7 Hazen Drive
P.O. Box 483
Concord, NH 03302-0483

and should be received no later than **October 20, 2003.**

October 24, 2003

Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation
(GACIT)

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

DATE OF HEARING: October 8, 2003
7:00 PM

LOCATION OF HEARING: Rindge Town Meeting House
Main Street
Rindge, NH

SUBJECT: State's Ten-Year Transportation Improvement Plan

ATTENDEE LIST: David Wheeler, Executive Councilor
Carol Murray, Commissioner, NHDOT
Jeff Brillhart, Director of Project Development, NHDOT
Jeff Porter, Assistant Director, SWRPC

See Attached List

Executive Councilor David Wheeler opened the Public Hearing at 7:10 PM and thanked the public for taking the time to attend the Public Hearing. Councilor Wheeler introduced Commissioner Carol Murray and Director Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT and Jeff Porter, Assistant Director, SWRPC. Councilor Wheeler requested Jeff Porter to describe the regional planning process for the Ten Year Plan.

Jeff Porter said that the Southwest Regional Planning Commission (SWRPC) covers 36 towns and has been involved in the planning process since 1972. Mr. Porter explained that every two years, SWRPC solicits communities for new projects to be included in the Ten Year Plan. SWRPC also reviews changes in scope of existing projects and their priority. Mr. Porter noted that the regional planning commission staff works with local officials and NHDOT District 4 Maintenance staff in defining the projects to meet the needs of the Community, Region, and State. Mr. Porter said that the Southwest Region Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) reviews projects, which are nominated for inclusion in the Ten Year Plan. The criteria used by the TAC in rating projects are: eligibility for funding, mitigation of hazards, feasibility of projects, cost/benefit, access from houses, enhancing infrastructure, application of context appropriate designs, community support, and consistency with a larger regional/state vision. Using those criteria, TAC ranks proposals and gives their recommendations to the Planning Commission's Board of Directors, and then to NHDOT. Mr. Porter then described the examples of priority transportation projects that have developed over time for the Southwest Region: Keene Swanzey Bypass Improvement Project; Connecticut River Bridge Replacement on NH 9 and NH 119; safety improvements at the intersection of NH 12 and NH 119 in Fitzwilliam; NH 12 Troy Village Improvements (Troy NH 12 Bypass); safety improvements to US 202 Peterborough (Southfield Lane - Hancock Rd.); US

202/Granite Street/Concord Street Peterborough; NH 101 Reconstruction, Temple "S" Curves; NH 101 Reconstruction, Jewett St. - Ryan Rd., Marlborough; and attention to NH 101 truck climbing lanes.

Councilor Wheeler requested NHDOT Commissioner Carol Murray to discuss Statewide Priorities.

Commissioner Carol Murray recognized the Regional Planning Commission (RPC) as the starting point in the Ten Year Plan process and thanked the RPC for that role. Commissioner Murray noted that public input is a key element of the Ten Year Plan update process and encouraged people to send any written comments to the attention of Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT. Commissioner Murray stated that the Ten Year Plan process is particularly difficult this time because there are more needs than available funding. To address the situation, the NHDOT updated cost estimates for all projects in the existing Ten Year Plan. Commissioner Murray noted that estimates increased. In addition, the funding anticipated in the last update of the Ten Year Plan was overestimated. Commissioner Murray explained that for the year 2005 alone, the last update anticipated \$15 million more than what is now expected. Commissioner Murray noted that for this update, more conservative projections are proposed based on the latest information out of Washington regarding federal reauthorization. Commissioner Murray noted that it was evident there were more projects than could be funded and projects had to be moved out in time. Commissioner Murray said that there must be an emphasis on funding to preserve the existing transportation system. Commissioner Murray noted that the NHDOT is developing a prioritized list of problem bridges.

Councilor Wheeler noted that the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT) will meet as a whole on the draft Ten Year Plan so that it can be submitted to the Governor in December and then to the Legislature in January for legislative action by July 1, 2004. Councilor Wheeler observed the process of Ten Year Plan update begins all over again in the Fall of 2004.

Councilor Wheeler opened the hearing to public comment.

Ed Betz, Town of Peterborough, complimented the NHDOT's municipally managed Bridge Program. Mr. Betz said that there are safety concerns with respect to the guardrail on US 202 south of the Main Street Bridge – just north of NH 101. Mr. Betz requested NHDOT's consideration of repairs/reconstruction of the sidewalk and fence associated with the Granite Street retaining wall above the Contoocook River. The town is not comfortable with delaying the project, which would improve pedestrian safety. Mr. Betz said that the Preliminary Engineering of this project is programmed for 2011 and right-of-way in 2013. Commissioner Murray said that this is the kind of project that is related to preserving the system. Commissioner Murray said that if funding is available, she would recommend it for the Municipal Bridge Program.

Tim Murphy, Executive Director, Southwest Regional Planning Commission, referred to the April 2003 letter from his organization and said the Keene Bypass is a special concern for the region as well as the Connecticut River Bridge project on NH 9, which was recently opened to traffic. The delays of some phases of the bypass project proposed in the current version of the 2005-2014 Ten Year Plan jeopardize the ability of the State to provide an effective

solution to a regional problem. Mr. Murphy noted that this is the first version of the Ten Year Plan with a future considerations section and four of the seven components of the Keene Bypass project are included in this section. Mr. Murphy said that no dates are assigned to these projects in the future considerations section and expressed concern with the relative order of the various Keene-Swanzey projects. Mr. Murphy said he is not sure how the system will operate, if three components are built and are fully improved, and the rest of the components are not improved. If the State is unable to afford a complex, large-scale improvement project, it may be prudent to re-design the project, which may be of a smaller scale but able to provide acceptable relief to traffic congestion and that can be funded in a timely fashion. Mr. Murphy said that due to a few large projects in the state that are priorities, some of the smaller projects end up being delayed. He urged NHDOT to consider setting up a separate funding stream to fund smaller projects. He encouraged the State to give due consideration to bonding as a funding mechanism for the few largest projects in the State, again as a means to reduce delays to smaller projects.

Commissioner Murray explained that GARVEE bonds allow states the opportunity to bond large projects to get them done sooner. Commissioner Murray noted that in the draft Ten Year Plan, the last contract for widening I-93 is scheduled to advertise in 2014. Should the I-93 bonding be approved, the last contract could be accelerated to perhaps 2008. Commissioner Murray also explained that, if I-93 were bonded, money for other projects could be made available. Commissioner Murray noted that a subcommittee of the House Public Works Committee is reviewing the I-93 bonding proposal, but is skeptical. Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT noted that bonding would require payments as high as \$30 million per year through to 2024. Commissioner Murray noted that there is also a discussion to increase user fees. Commissioner Murray said that on the federal side, there are uncertainties about the outcome of federal reauthorization. Commissioner Murray noted that New Hampshire traditionally gets more money than it sends to Washington. The State needs to balance system capacity expansion relative to system preservation. The State is still working with a backlog of small projects delayed by the NH 101 project in the 1980's. Commissioner Murray also expressed doubt that formal programmatic changes can be implemented to address small project needs.

Chris Collins, Senator John Sununu's office, said that Senator Sununu is very interested in local needs and encourages constituents to inform his office of their needs and opinions to ensure that he best represents New Hampshire's need in Washington.

Duffy Monahan, Peterborough, encouraged NHDOT to appreciate the importance of Peterborough's community character and cultural heritage relative to the appearance of the Granite Street retaining wall and the need for an innovative solution to assure the structural integrity of the wall. She also stressed that traffic calming should be integral in any changes to NH 101 through Peterborough.

Richard Freeman, Peterborough, asked about the NHDOT's policy on the installation of new traffic signals on rural arterials at intersections with local roads. Commissioner Murray responded that the signals should meet engineering warrants. There are times when signals can be more of a problem than a help. Mr. Freeman said that where local roads meet with routes like NH 101 and US 202, it can be extremely hard to enter the main routes.

Commissioner Murray noted that this is a common phenomenon and there is a need for further discussions to address these types of problems.

Councilor Wheeler thanked the NHDOT for preparing the draft Ten Year Plan and noted there is over \$1 billion programmed in the Ten Year Plan.

Councilor Wheeler thanked the attendees and adjourned the Public Hearing at 7:55 p.m.

Submitted by: Tim Murphy, SWRPC

Noted by: Ram Maddali, Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT

Governor's Advisory Commission
on
Intermodal Transportation (GACIT)
2005-2014 Ten Year Plan Public Hearing

Laconia City Hall
Room 200A-2nd floor
48 Beacon Street East
October 9, 2003
9:00 AM

AGENDA

1. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
 - Welcome and Introductions
2. Regional Planning Commission
 - Regional process
 - Regional priorities
3. NH Department of Transportation
 - Statewide issues
 - Statewide priorities
4. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
5. Public Comments
6. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
 - Closing Comments
7. Adjourn

Written Comments should be addressed to:

David J. Brillhart, P.E.
Director of Project Development
New Hampshire Department of Transportation
John O. Morton Building, 7 Hazen Drive
P.O. Box 483
Concord, NH 03302-0483

and should be received no later than **October 20, 2003.**

October 17, 2003

Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation
(GACIT)

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

DATE OF HEARING: October 9, 2003
9:00 AM

LOCATION OF HEARING: Laconia City Hall
45 Beacon Street East
Laconia, NH

SUBJECT: State's Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan

ATTENDEE LIST: Raymond Burton, Executive Councilor
Carol Murray, Commissioner, NHDOT
Jeff Brillhart, Director of Project Development, NHDOT
Kimon Koulet, Executive Director, LRPC

See Attached List

Executive Councilor Raymond Burton opened the Public Hearing at 9:02 AM and explained that by law the five members of the Executive Council, along with the NHDOT Commissioner form the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT) and are required to hold public hearings to receive comments from the public on the draft Ten Year Plan. Councilor Burton explained that about a year ago, the regional planning commissions started reviewing and prioritizing projects and sent a prioritized list of projects to the NHDOT. The NHDOT then submitted recommendations to the GACIT committee. Councilor Burton noted that there are eleven public hearings to be held in his District before the end of October. Councilor Burton continued by stating that on November 19, 2003, the GACIT will meet as a whole on the draft Ten Year Plan so that it can be submitted to the Governor in December and then to the Legislature in January for legislative action by July 1,2004.

Councilor Burton recognized Eileen Cabanel, City of Laconia, Representative William Leber, Kimon Koulet, Lakes Region Planning Commission, Dennis Fenton, Andover Board of Selectmen, Commissioner Carol Murray and Jeff Brillhart from NH Department of Transportation.

Commissioner Murray thanked the public for attending the public hearing and stated that the Ten Year Plan process is particularly difficult this time because there are more needs than available funding. To address the situation, the NHDOT updated cost estimates for all projects in the existing Ten Year Plan. Commissioner Murray noted that estimates increased. In addition, the funding anticipated in the last update of the Ten Year Plan was overestimated. Commissioner Murray explained that for the year 2005 alone, the last update

anticipated \$15 million more than what is now expected. Commissioner Murray noted that for this update, more conservative projections are proposed based on the latest information out of Washington regarding federal reauthorization. Commissioner Murray noted that it was evident there were more projects than could be funded and projects had to be moved out in time. Commissioner Murray said that there must be an emphasis on funding to preserve the existing transportation system. Commissioner Murray noted that the NHDOT is developing a prioritized list of problem bridges. In addition the NHDOT is identifying intersections that need improvement.

Councilor Burton noted that at the federal level, US Representative Don Young, Chairman of the House Transportation Committee, is advocating for a substantial gas tax increase. Councilor Burton stated that he is in favor of a gas tax increase for the State. Councilor Burton said that the issue of bonding I-93 is under consideration at the State level. If I-93, which costs about \$420 million, were bonded, funding programmed for that project could be freed up for other projects.

Kimon Koulet, Executive Director, Lakes Region Planning Commission said that the regional planning process is a very transparent, bottom up process. He noted that federal and state law mandates the role of regional planning commissions. Mr. Koulet reviewed a map showing projects submitted in 2003 and their distribution. He said because of the State's Transportation financial situation, the Lakes Region Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) decided not to propose new projects be added to the Ten Year Plan. He then reviewed those projects in the proposed Ten Year Plan that are to be under construction by the year 2015. Mr. Koulet said that funding is the most significant issue. In developing this year's recommendations, Mr. Koulet said that the Lakes Region TAC reviewed the phasing of projects as a cost savings measure to see if some could be constructed in phases rather than all at once. He cited: the first part of the NH Route 140 project and the recommendation that Belmont village portion be upgraded earlier than the rest of the project. Mr. Koulet noted that out of eighteen projects in the current Ten Year Plan only 2.5 remain in the proposed Plan for the Lakes Region. Mr. Koulet concluded by stating that there is a need to reassess the allocation and timing of funding, especially for projects in rural parts of the State.

Councilor Burton then opened up the public hearing for questions and comments.

NH Representative Bill Leber, Andover, said that he is satisfied with the Ten Year Plan process and noted that the communities and the RPC's work very hard in prioritizing projects. Representative Leber expressed his concern that the Andover-Franklin NH 11 project appears to have been removed from the Plan. The project extends from the intersection of NH 11 and NH 3A, 4.2 miles west to East Andover and is broken up into several smaller projects, including that from the intersection of NH 11 and NH 3A west to Webster Lake (1.1 miles). Representative Leber noted that the NH 11&140 Legislative Study concluded that the entire 4.2 miles was a critical improvement much needed along the Corridor. Emergency medical personnel have expressed concern that this section of NH 11 is no longer safe to travel with patients. Representative Leber also questioned the status of a federal resurfacing program project set to rubblize the concrete pavement from Webster Lake west to East Andover, and stressed that this needs to stay on track and be completed as quickly as possible in 2004. Representative Leber expressed concern that the LRPC regional

recommendations were given too little attention in the Ten Year Plan update, and that the I-93 Salem-Manchester project should not be allowed to drain funds from other areas of the State where projects are just as important. He suggested slowing the I-93 widening down to free up more money to meet regional priorities rather than just the priorities of the southern part of the State.

Anne Luchini, Gilford, expressed her concerns about the future of NH 11 between Alton and Gilford. Ms. Luchini noted her safety and noise concerns about this stretch of highway. Ms. Luchini said that there are about 2700-3800 vehicles going by her property and stated her strong opposition to widening the highway, since that could encourage higher speeds. Ms. Luchini suggested relocating the highway away from the Lake. Ms. Luchini noted that improvements to I-93 will bring more people to the Lakes Region, which is a major destination, but the State is not taking care of the roads in the Lakes Region.

Ken Whiteside, Alton, expressed concerns about NH 11 and is opposed to improvements on the existing location. He proposed the road be relocated away from the Lake for environmental reasons, including the discharge of road salt and sand into Lake Winnepesaukee. He felt that improving the road on existing locations may actually lead to bigger safety problems.

Dennis Fenton, Andover Selectman, said that he realizes the budgetary constraints, but supports the statements of Representative Leber. Mr. Fenton noted that there is a bridge on NH 11 between Alton and Gilford that is in need of repair.

Linda Frawley, Belmont, spoke about the Belmont NH 140 project, and said that there is a need to improve the village, using Context Sensitive Solutions. Ms. Frawley indicated her support for retaining the Belmont Village portion of the project in the Ten Year Plan.

John Edgar, representing the Town of Meredith, appreciated the financial constraints facing the NHDOT and the NHDOT's willingness to look at new ideas. Mr. Edgar noted that the Lakes Region Transportation Technical Advisory Committee considered that the STIP projects are a given and need not be evaluated. Mr. Edgar noted that the NH 106 (Parade Road)/US 3 signalization project continues to be delayed and, as a result, a local development could be delayed. Mr. Edgar noted the need for this project. Mr. Edgar noted that Meredith Project # 10430 along NH 25 is proposed to be completed in two phases. The Town is not in support of this phasing, because of the time difference between the two phases. Mr. Edgar said that Project # 12637 in New Hampton, could be divided into three phases: first phase being limited to spot improvements such as at Bobby's Girl Restaurant and the NH 104/Chase Road intersection; second phase being the purchase of access rights along NH 104; and the third phase being the full reconstruction of the highway corridor.

Commissioner Murray thanked Mr. Edgar for his suggestions and stated that she is in support of access management.

Charlie St. Clair, Laconia, expressed concern about the Department's focus on I-93 and said that I-93 should not be a priority. Mr. St. Clair expressed concern that projects statewide will be sidelined by I-93. Mr. St. Clair expressed his support for rail, which will benefit commuters, and expressed hope that future transportation plans will include more rail projects.

He also noted that he is not in favor of light rail down the center of I-93, but instead favors use of the abandoned Manchester-Lawrence Rail corridor. Mr. St. Clair questioned why bicycles are given so much attention in the Ten Year Plan. Mr. St. Clair noted that tolls for I-93 and one-way tolling on the Spaulding turnpike are possibilities. Mr. St. Clair expressed his support for rumble strips at the tolls (like in Maine) as a way of enhancing safety. Mr. St. Clair recommended consideration of in-pavement lane demarcation devices – reflectors that are used throughout the snow belt. Mr. St. Clair showed pictures of animal warning devices used on the Indiana turnpike and encouraged usage of similar devices in New Hampshire. Mr. St. Clair expressed the need to utilize the “Business Route Signs” to alert motorists to businesses that have been bypassed. Mr. St. Clair expressed support for roundabouts like in Brattleboro, VT. Mr. St. Clair requested consideration of allowing signals to be on flash at night at signalized intersections when there is little traffic. Mr. St. Clair noted that at the NH 16 and NH 25 Intersection – uses a permissive green on the right turn and wishes this was used more often.

Commissioner Murray thanked Mr. St. Clair for his suggestions and agreed to follow up with a written response to his suggestions.

David Kerr, Barnstead, said that the reconstruction of NH 28 from Barnstead into Alton is definitely needed because of poor sight distance and sharp curves. Mr. Kerr noted that the NHDOT recently completed resurfacing this highway, but this work will not solve the problems. The road is in poor condition, and also needs significant spot safety improvements such as the intersection of NH 28 and North Barnstead Road. He also suggested that the reconstruction of the road be integrated with construction of a multi-use trail.

Commissioner Murray agreed that the section of roadway in question requires attention. Commissioner Murray said that she agreed to advance the Preliminary Engineering of this project. Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT, said that surveying had started for this section of roadway and the rough plans will be reviewed with the Town in summer/fall of 2004. Commissioner Murray noted that spot improvements involving guardrail and intersections could be advanced.

Ralph Carter, Sanbornton Selectman, said that he supports Councilor Burton’s suggestion to increase the gas tax. Mr. Carter emphasized the importance of tourism in New Hampshire and that poor road conditions hamper tourism. Mr. Carter felt that no amount of widening I-93 could forevermore handle all the traffic. Mr. Carter said that the impacts from widening I-93 will be felt all along I-93 to the north, and that the project should be phased. Mr. Carter suggested that interstate cross-overs to maintain traffic during construction should be left in place and used for emergency access. Mr. Carter asked if the NHDOT gives priority to projects that come out of Corridor Studies. Commissioner Murray said yes, and that corridor studies are of great benefit to the NHDOT by providing a long-term vision for the corridor. Mr. Carter suggested that perhaps a portion of the gas tax should be allocated to Corridor Studies.

Councilor Burton noted that all written comments should be sent to Jeff Brillhart at NHDOT.

Tracy Scott, Operations Manager – Greater Laconia Transit Authority (GLTA), stressed the need for the State to provide funding to the Rural Transit Agencies.

Linda Frawley thanked the NHDOT for the information on the Website.

Councilor Burton thanked everyone for attending the Public Hearing and concluded the Public Hearing at 10:42 AM.

Submitted by: Greg Tansley, LRPC

Noted by: Ram Maddali, Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT

Governor's Advisory Commission
on
Intermodal Transportation (GACIT)
2005-2014 Ten Year Plan Public Hearing

Lincoln Town Office
Community Room
112 Main Street
October 9, 2003
1:00 PM

AGENDA

1. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
 - Welcome and Introductions
2. Regional Planning Commission
 - Regional process
 - Regional priorities
3. NH Department of Transportation
 - Statewide issues
 - Statewide priorities
4. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
5. Public Comments
6. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
 - Closing Comments
7. Adjourn

Written Comments should be addressed to:

David J. Brillhart, P.E.
Director of Project Development
New Hampshire Department of Transportation
John O. Morton Building, 7 Hazen Drive
P.O. Box 483
Concord, NH 03302-0483

and should be received no later than **October 20, 2003.**

October 13, 2003

Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation
(GACIT)

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

DATE OF HEARING: October 9, 2003
1:00 PM

LOCATION OF HEARING: Lincoln Town Office
112 Main Street
Lincoln, NH

SUBJECT: State's Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan

ATTENDEE LIST: Raymond Burton, Executive Councilor
Carol Murray, Commissioner, NHDOT
Jeff Brillhart, Director of Project Development, NHDOT
Stacey Doll, Transportation Planner, NCC

See Attached List

Executive Councilor Raymond Burton opened the Public Hearing at 1:12 PM and explained that by law the five members of the Executive Council, along with the NHDOT Commissioner form the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT), and are required to hold public hearings to receive comments from the public on the draft Ten Year Plan. Councilor Burton explained that about a year ago, the regional planning commissions started reviewing and prioritizing projects and sent a prioritized list of projects to the NHDOT. Councilor Burton said that the NHDOT in turn developed the draft Ten Year Plan for 2005-2014 and submitted it to the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT). Councilor Burton said that there are eleven public hearings in the month of October in his District. Councilor Burton said that these public hearings have been publicized through press releases and advertisements in newspapers, and town selectboards and the NH Congressional Delegation have been notified. Councilor Burton introduced Simon Thomson from Senator John Sununu's office and welcomed him to the public hearing.

Councilor Burton introduced Stacey Doll, Transportation Planner from the North Country Council (NCC) Regional Planning Commission. Ms. Doll explained that every two years, after notification by the NHDOT, North Country Council solicits communities for new projects to be included in the Ten Year Plan. Ms. Doll said that the Regional Transportation Committee for the North Country Council is made up of representatives of the region who review and prioritize North Country transportation projects for the Ten Year Plan. Ms. Doll noted that Transportation Committee verified current funding constraints, and proposed that no new projects be added to the Plan. Ms. Doll said the Transportation Committee reviewed the projects and the needs that had already been outlined and prioritized them. Ms. Doll on

behalf of the North Country Council thanked the NHDOT for its efforts in discussing the funding constraints and working hard for the best funding situation.

Councilor Burton introduced Commissioner Carol Murray. Commissioner Murray stated that the Ten Year Plan process is particularly difficult this time because there are more needs than available funding. To address the situation, the NHDOT updated cost estimates for all projects in the existing Ten Year Plan. Commissioner Murray noted that estimates increased. In addition, the funding anticipated in the last update of the Ten Year Plan was overestimated. Commissioner Murray explained that for the first year alone, the last update anticipated \$15 million more than what is now expected. Commissioner Murray noted that the current draft Ten Year Plan is a realistic view of what can be done. Commissioner Murray noted that it was evident there were more projects than could be funded and projects had to be moved out in time.

Councilor Burton commented that it is not good to raise communities' expectations on projects. Councilor Burton stated that the NH state legislature should begin discussions on increasing the state's gas tax. Councilor Burton noted that US Representative Don Young, Chairman of the US House Transportation Committee, is advocating for a 5-cent gas tax increase. Councilor Burton said that a one-cent increase of gas tax would generate \$6 million at the state level and \$1 billion at the federal level annually. Councilor Burton noted that Commissioner Carol Murray has been working with the legislature to allow the sale of GARVEE bonds to support the \$420 million widening of I-93 from Salem-Manchester. If I-93 were bonded, Councilor Burton explained that the money set aside for that project in the Ten Year Plan could be freed up for other projects and also the I-93 widening project could be completed sooner. Councilor Burton felt that the House, Senate and the Governor might endorse the concept.

Councilor Burton stated that once all the GACIT public hearings are concluded, on November 19th the GACIT will meet to discuss the issues and concerns from the public hearings and to make any final edits to the draft Ten Year Plan before submitting it to the Governor. Councilor Burton noted that the Ten Year Plan gets submitted to Legislature by the middle of January and an approved Ten Year Plan will be in place by July 2004.

Councilor Burton then opened up the public hearing for questions and comments.

Glenn English, Town Manager for Haverhill, said as far as Town of Haverhill is concerned, transportation issues are being addressed. He stated the NHDOT had done several projects in his town and he thanked NHDOT for them. Mr. English explained that as a member of the North Country Council Transportation Committee as well as the Board of Directors, there were some issues that need to be addressed at the regional level regarding transportation. Mr. English stated that he supports bonding I-93 and there could be savings in term of project costs. Commissioner Murray noted that the subcommittee of the NH House Public Works Committee is reviewing the I-93 bonding proposal, but is somewhat skeptical. Commissioner Murray noted that all options should be evaluated. Mr. English stated that there was nothing wrong with incurring some debt for long-term infrastructure projects of such a large magnitude. Mr. English asked Mr. Thomson about the Highway Trust Funds balances and urged Congressman Sununu to get a fair share for New Hampshire. Commissioner Murray noted that the Federal Transportation Enhancement program was in

jeopardy and through support from local officials, regional entities and the federal delegation the program still exists. Commissioner Murray stated that in the absence of the Transportation Enhancement program, it would be difficult for Transportation Enhancement type projects to compete in the Ten Year Plan with larger projects like I-93. Councilor Burton said according to the last chart he received, in 2001 there was \$27 billion in the Highway Trust Fund and \$4.5 billion in the Aviation Trust Fund. Councilor Burton requested Mr. Thomson to provide highway trust fund balances and requested Commissioner Murray to include this information for the GACIT meeting of November 19. Councilor Burton reviewed the distribution of gas tax revenues to NHDOT and other state agencies.

Councilor Burton then acknowledged Ted Sutton, Town Manager of Lincoln. Mr. Sutton thanked NHDOT for all the hard work of the state maintenance crews in the Town of Lincoln. Mr. Sutton expressed his concern that if money is not spent for improving the roads in the North Country tourists and travelers may not visit North Country. Mr. Sutton said that there are over six million people passing through Lincoln area each year. Commissioner Murray noted that in the North Country, there is a high dependence on highway transportation infrastructure.

Councilor Burton asked Stacey Doll if a town could receive traffic counts from North Country Council. Ms. Doll explained that NHDOT has requested 220 counts from the North Country Council this year. Ms. Doll explained that if a town needed several counts and a detailed traffic study needs to be done, the North Country Council could work with them through a contract. However, if a town simply needed one or two counters out for a week, the Council could do this free of charge through their traffic count program.

Councilor Burton thanked everyone for coming and closed the public hearing at 1:52 PM.

Submitted by: Stacey Doll, NCC

Noted by: Ram Maddali, Jeff Brillhart

Governor's Advisory Commission
on
Intermodal Transportation (GACIT)
2005-2014 Ten Year Plan Public Hearing

Conway Town Office
1634 Main Street
October 9, 2003
4:00 PM

AGENDA

1. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
 - Welcome and Introductions
2. Regional Planning Commission
 - Regional process
 - Regional priorities
3. NH Department of Transportation
 - Statewide issues
 - Statewide priorities
4. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
5. Public Comments
6. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
 - Closing Comments
7. Adjourn

Written Comments should be addressed to:

David J. Brillhart, P.E.
Director of Project Development
New Hampshire Department of Transportation
John O. Morton Building, 7 Hazen Drive
P.O. Box 483
Concord, NH 03302-0483

and should be received no later than **October 20, 2003.**

October 14, 2003

Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation
(GACIT)

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

DATE OF HEARING: October 9, 2003
4:00 PM

LOCATION OF HEARING: Conway Town Hall
1634 Main Street
Conway, NH

SUBJECT: State's Ten-Year Transportation Improvement Plan

ATTENDEE LIST: Raymond Burton, Executive Councilor
Carol Murray, Commissioner, NHDOT
Jeff Brillhart, Director of Project Development, NHDOT
Stacey Doll, Transportation Planner, NCC

See Attached List

Executive Councilor Raymond Burton opened the Public Hearing at 4:00 PM and explained that by law the five members of the Executive Council, along with the NHDOT Commissioner form the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT), and are required to hold public hearings to receive comments from the public on the draft Ten Year Plan. Councilor Burton explained that about a year ago, the regional planning commissions started reviewing and prioritizing projects and sent a prioritized list of projects to the NHDOT. Councilor Burton said that the NHDOT in turn developed the draft Ten Year Plan for 2005-2014 and submitted it to the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT). Councilor Burton said that there are eleven public hearings in the month of October in his District. Councilor Burton stated that once all the GACIT public hearings concluded, on November 19th, the GACIT will meet to discuss the issues and concerns from the public hearings and to make any final edits to the draft Ten Year Plan before submitting it to the Governor. Councilor Burton noted that the Ten Year Plan will then be submitted to Legislature by the middle of January and an approved Ten Year Plan will be in place by July 2004.

Councilor Burton stated that one of the sources of funding transportation projects is state gas tax revenues. The state gas tax and other motor vehicle fees generate about \$250 million. Councilor Burton reviewed the distribution of motor vehicle revenues to the NHDOT and other state agencies. Councilor Burton explained that the trucking companies are currently suing the State of New Hampshire claiming the gas tax must be spent on highways and that the funds should not go to other agencies. Councilor Burton noted that the other source of funding for highways is the federal gas tax. Councilor Burton explained the Highway Trust Fund and the Aviation Trust Fund and noted that the Highway Trust Fund balance

information will be included along with the agenda for the GACIT meeting of November 19. Councilor Burton introduced Harold Parker from Senator John Sununu's office and welcomed him to the public hearing. Councilor Burton pointed out that at the federal level, US Representative Don Young, Chairman of the House Transportation Committee is advocating for a substantial gas tax increase. Councilor Burton stated that he is in favor of a gas tax increase for the State. Lastly, Councilor Burton said that if new projects are added to the Ten Year Plan, they should be added at the end of the Plan.

Councilor Burton introduced Stacey Doll, Transportation Planner from the North Country Council Regional Planning Commission. Ms. Doll explained that every two years, after notification by the NHDOT, North Country Council solicits communities for new projects to be included in the Ten Year Plan. Ms. Doll said that the Regional Transportation Committee for the North Country Council is made up of representatives of the region's communities who review and prioritize North Country transportation projects for the Ten Year Plan. Ms. Doll noted that Transportation Committee verified current funding constraints, and proposed that no new projects be added to the Plan. Ms. Doll said the Transportation Committee reviewed the projects and the needs that had already been outlined and prioritized them. Ms. Doll noted that the North Country Transportation Committee fully supports the possible bonding of I-93, which could free up funding for other projects throughout the State.

Councilor Burton introduced Commissioner Carol Murray and requested her to explain the concept of GARVEE bonds. Commissioner Murray explained it is an innovative financing method under the Federal Legislation (TEA-21), which gives states the opportunity to bond large projects to get them done sooner. Commissioner Murray explained eight states had used GARVEE bonds. Commissioner Murray noted that in the draft Ten Year Plan, the last contract for widening I-93 is scheduled to advertise in 2014. Should the I-93 bonding be approved, the same last contract could be accelerated to perhaps 2008. Commissioner Murray also explained that, if I-93 were bonded, money for other projects could be made available. Commissioner Murray noted that a subcommittee of the House Public Works Committee is reviewing the I-93 bonding proposal but is skeptical. Commissioner Murray recognized Senator Joe Kenney, Chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee in the audience.

Councilor Burton then opened the public hearing up for comments. Earl Sires, Town Manager of the Town of Conway, thanked Councilor Burton and the group for coming to Conway. He stated his appreciation for all the hard work that has gone into the new Visitor's Center and the North – South Road, and acknowledged it was the cooperation of many state agencies working together which got these projects done. Mr. Sires then stated his support for the River Road bike project and hoped it would not slip later in time than it has. He explained it is a Transportation Enhancement project and it should not slip into the out years of the Plan.

Dee McClave, Selectperson from the Town of Jackson, asked about GARVEE bonds. She wanted to know if it was federal money borrowing against federal funding. Carol Murray explained to some extent it was. Commissioner Murray said she is not really in favor of borrowing, but realizes we need to examine options for getting projects done. Greg Placy, NHDOT 1 District Engineer responded to Earl Sires about the River Road project. He explained it was moved back due to the original plan to improve all bridges along the route.

The timing of doing every bridge pushed this project's completion date out. Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT, agreed with Mr. Placy and explained to Mr. Sires that the project has been redesigned. Since the bridges are in good condition, they will not be improved and the project will be done in keeping with the previous schedule. Mr. Brillhart noted that in the draft Ten Year Plan the Transportation Enhancement and Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality projects maintained their current schedules, with very few exceptions. Ms. McClave thanked NHDOT for all the hard work of the state maintenance crews.

NH Senator Joe Kenney acknowledged the hard times in the funding of Transportation. Senator Kenney noted that he discussed with Congressman Bradley transportation issues and has listed the Chocorua village project and the Conway Bypass as priorities. Senator Kenney stated we need more resources for maintenance and said he will continue to support transportation planning and projects.

Commissioner Murray noted that the NHDOT is developing a prioritized list of problem bridges. In addition, the NHDOT is identifying intersections that need improvements.

Councilor Burton noted that after all the planning that goes into a project, sometimes a project is stopped at the construction phase. Councilor Burton noted that in order for a project to be implemented, it has to be technically feasible, environmentally permissible, economically affordable and most of all, have the public support.

Dee McClave stated there is a need for public transportation – specifically for the elderly in the rural areas of the North Country. Commissioner Murray agreed and explained she talked to the new Health and Human Services Commissioner about the need for coordinated public transportation. Stacey Doll explained the grassroots effort transpiring in the Littleton area to coordinate public transportation and plans to extend this throughout the region.

Councilor Burton noted that written comments should be forwarded to the attention of Jeff Brillhart at the NHDOT by November 1.

Councilor Burton thanked everyone for coming and closed the public hearing at 4:40 PM.

Submitted by: Stacey Doll, NCC

Noted by: Ram Maddali, Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT

Governor's Advisory Commission
on
Intermodal Transportation (GACIT)
2005-2014 Ten Year Plan Public Hearing

Berlin City Hall
Auditorium
168 Main Street
October 9, 2003
7:30 PM

AGENDA

1. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
 - Welcome and Introductions
2. Regional Planning Commission
 - Regional process
 - Regional priorities
3. NH Department of Transportation
 - Statewide issues
 - Statewide priorities
4. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
5. Public Comments
6. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
 - Closing Comments
7. Adjourn

Written Comments should be addressed to:

David J. Brillhart, P.E.
Director of Project Development
New Hampshire Department of Transportation
John O. Morton Building, 7 Hazen Drive
P.O. Box 483
Concord, NH 03302-0483

and should be received no later than **October 20, 2003.**

October 14, 2003

Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation
(GACIT)

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

DATE OF HEARING: October 9, 2003
7:30 PM

LOCATION OF HEARING: Berlin City Hall
168 Main Street
Berlin, NH

SUBJECT: State's Ten-Year Transportation Improvement Plan

ATTENDEE LIST: Raymond Burton, Executive Councilor
Carol Murray, Commissioner, NHDOT
Jeff Brillhart, Director of Project Development, NHDOT
Stacey Doll, Transportation Planner, NCC

See Attached List

Executive Councilor Raymond Burton opened the Public Hearing at 7:30 PM and explained that by law the five members of the Executive Council, along with the NHDOT Commissioner form the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT) and are required to hold public hearings to receive comments from the public on the draft Ten Year Plan. Councilor Burton explained that about a year ago, the regional planning commissions started reviewing and prioritizing projects and sent a prioritized list of projects to the NHDOT. The NHDOT then submitted recommendations to the GACIT committee. Councilor Burton noted that there are eleven public hearings to be held in his District before end of October. Councilor Burton continued by stating that on November 19, 2003, the GACIT will meet as a whole on the draft Ten Year Plan so that it can be submitted to the Governor in December and then to the Legislature in January for legislative action by July 1, 2004.

Councilor Burton stated that one of the sources for funding transportation projects is state gas tax revenues. The state gas tax and other motor vehicle fees generate about \$250 million. Councilor Burton reviewed the distribution of motor vehicle revenues to the NHDOT and other state agencies. Councilor Burton explained that the trucking companies are currently suing the State of New Hampshire claiming the gas tax must be spent on highways and that the funds should not go to other agencies. Councilor Burton noted that the other source of funding for highways is the federal gas tax. Councilor Burton explained the Highway Trust Fund and the Aviation Trust Fund and noted that the Highway Trust Fund balance information will be included along with the agenda for the GACIT meeting of November 19.

Councilor Burton introduced Stacey Doll, Regional Transportation Planner for North Country Council, Commissioner Carol Murray and Jeff Brillhart of the NH Department of Transportation, Harold Parker from Senator John Sununu's office, Mayor Bob Danderson, David Morin, Greg Placy, Sharon Penney and Geoff Dalphonse.

Councilor Burton requested Stacey Doll, Transportation Planner of North Country Council Regional Planning Commission to explain the regional planning process. Ms. Doll explained that every two years, after notification by the NHDOT, North Country Council solicits communities for new projects to be included in the Ten Year Plan. Ms. Doll said that the Regional Transportation Committee for the North Country Council is made up of representatives of the region who review and prioritize North Country transportation projects for the Ten Year Plan. Ms. Doll noted that Transportation Committee verified current funding constraints, and proposed that no new projects be added to the Plan. Ms. Doll said instead the Transportation Committee decided to review the projects and the needs that had already been outlined and prioritize them. Ms. Doll stated that the NH 16 project that encompasses the area between Milan and Errol (and the Conway Bypass) are high priorities for the Committee.

Councilor Burton introduced Commissioner Carol Murray. Commissioner Murray stated that the Conway Bypass project is moving forward and acknowledged Mayor Bob Danderson for his support of this project. Commissioner Murray said she was also very pleased to see Berlin and Gorham working together and applauded their efforts. Commissioner Murray stated that the Ten Year Plan process is particularly difficult this time because there are more needs than available funding. To address the situation, the NHDOT updated cost estimates for all projects in the existing Ten Year Plan. Commissioner Murray noted that estimates increased. In addition, the funding anticipated in the last update of the Ten Year Plan was overestimated. Commissioner Murray explained that for the first year alone, the last update anticipated \$15 million more than what is now expected. Commissioner Murray noted that for this update, more conservative projections are proposed based on the latest information out of Washington regarding federal reauthorization. Commissioner Murray noted that it was evident there were more projects than could be funded and projects had to be moved out in time. Commissioner Murray said that there must be an emphasis on funding to preserve the existing transportation system. Commissioner Murray noted that the NHDOT is developing a prioritized list of problem bridges. In addition, the NHDOT is identifying intersections that need improvements.

Councilor Burton then opened up the public hearing for questions and comments.

Bob Danderson, Mayor of Berlin, stated he supports the reappointment of Commissioner Carol Murray. He then asked how the Conway Bypass project was proceeding. Commissioner Murray said that the Bypass is going forward on schedule. A lawsuit has been filed, but the NHDOT is proceeding. Mayor Danderson asked for the schedule of the northern segment of the bypass. Commissioner Murray stated it is scheduled for 2009. She explained that each phase of the bypass has to be in place for two years before the next phase can be constructed. Mayor Danderson then expressed appreciation with the NHDOT's ability to alter plans and address the demolition of the burnt out property along NH 110. He asked if the NH 110 project was going to begin in 2004. Commissioner Murray said it is on the advertising schedule for 2004. Mayor Danderson then expressed the need for the Hillside

Avenue sidewalk project, which provides sidewalks for both the middle school and the high school. He then asked if there had been any movement with the East-West Corridor initiatives. Commissioner Murray stated the NHDOT recognizes the importance of this regional issue. She stated it is of major importance to commerce, but said she did not foresee a major four-lane highway being constructed through the North Country. Mayor Danderson's last concern was the lack of signage on Interstate 91 in Vermont alerting motorists to the attractions and towns in New Hampshire. Councilor Burton said the States are discussing coordination of signage.

Kristen Kiernan, Berlin, stated her concerns regarding the NH 110 project. She explained that she has only been living in her home along NH 110 for a little over a year, but she has received no information regarding the project nor been notified of any meetings. Commissioner Murray explained there have not been any meetings recently, but that the NHDOT project manager will call Ms. Kiernan and go over the specifics with her. Ms. Kiernan then requested an explanation of the eminent domain process. Commissioner Murray explained the appraisal process and relocation assistance program. Ms. Kiernan stated it will be hard for people in the area to find housing, as available housing is not abundant and market prices may go up if fifty plus families lose their homes. Commissioner Murray explained that part of the environmental documentation looks at home owners and the ability to provide adequate housing in the immediate area. Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT, restated the NHDOT project manager would be in contact with her and anyone else that needed specifics on the project.

Anthony Harp, Berlin, expressed concerns regarding accommodations for bicyclists. After noting that manhole covers and grates were dangerous for bicyclists, he stated that all roadways should have at a minimum four-foot shoulders to accommodate bicyclists. Mr. Harp also felt more should be done in the way of educating motorists that bicyclists do have the right to be on the roadway.

Robert Brown, Berlin, asked if there was any recognition of the merits of passenger rail from Portland, Maine to the north and west across New Hampshire. He noted this rail option could provide good east/west freight and passenger service. Commissioner Murray stated alternative means of transportation should be pursued. She stated the rail line from Lowell to Nashua was the Department's current rail priority. She stated high-speed rail from Montreal to Boston was being looked into. Mr. Brown then asked if there was an opportunity to create passenger rail on the current tracks. Commissioner Murray explained that the first step would be to talk to the railroad companies. She stated the current tracks could not be used for passenger rail because you need continuous welded rail for passenger rail, which is not what exists along the rail corridor.

Don Provencher, Gorham, expressed his support for rail and stated that the economy and tourism in the North Country is dependant upon rail. He stated there was an opportunity to continue the Downeaster rail north through the North Country. He stated Congressman Bass recently recognized the need for passenger rail in the area.

Sharon Penney, Executive Director of the Northern White Mountain Chamber of Commerce, stated she is an advocate for intermodalism. She stated that NH 2 and NH 16 were vital to the communities and the projects along those highways are of great concern. She stated the

need for more economic diversity and the need to have access to the tourist destinations. Ms. Penney expressed her support for the NH 16 projects from Milan to Errol stating the Town of Errol had been growing at a rapid rate and the frequent closures of NH 16 was not acceptable.

Geoff Dalphonse, Vice Chairman of the NH Transit Association, expressed appreciation for all the hard work NHDOT had given. He stated he is also the Vice Chairman of the North Country Council Transportation Committee. He stated the NH Department of Transportation made a presentation to the Committee concerning the Ten Year Plan and the funding constraints. He explained how the Committee decided not to solicit new projects, but to concentrate on the known needs and the projects already in the existing Ten Year Plan. He stated that with the help of the NHDOT District Engineers, the Committee reviewed the existing projects and a recommendation list was compiled. He stated his concern that many of the top priorities had not been put into the plan or had been delayed several years. He felt the Committee's recommendations were not given proper weight. He expressed his support for bonding the widening of Interstate 93.

Commissioner Murray stated that through an innovative financing method under the Federal Legislation (TEA-21) called GARVEE Bonds, the states have the opportunity to bond large projects to get them done sooner. Commissioner Murray noted that the Sub committee of the NH House Public Works Committee is reviewing the I-93 bonding proposal, but is somewhat skeptical. Commissioner Murray also explained that, if I-93 were bonded, money for other projects could be made available. Jeff Brillhart stated the North Country Council had also expressed their concern about the recommendations proposed in the draft Ten Year Plan. He explained that many projects were moved several years and consequently some projects moved to 2015, out of the Ten Year Plan. He explained that if Interstate 93 were bonded, there was a chance for some of those projects to move back into the Plan. Commissioner Murray stated the difficulty in coming up with the Ten Year Plan was sorting through the available funding, the updated project costs, and the recommendations by the Regional Planning Commissions and Department staff. Councilor Burton stated the public should request their legislators to increase the gas tax, support public transportation, and bond I-93 to provide the funding to get these important projects done.

Andy Garon, Berlin, asked if Phase 2 of the NH 110 project was scheduled for 2007 and asked what a realistic timeframe was for relocation. Jeff Brillhart stated that a public hearing is planned in July of 2004, and that there would typically be two years from the public hearing until construction begins, during which the Department can work with homeowners affected by the project.

Lisa Bureau, Berlin, stated she is a property owner along NH 110 and that she had been trying to obtain information on what is currently transpiring with the project, but she has had no luck. She suggested putting the information on the NHDOT and the City of Berlin's website. Mayor Danderson stated advertisements had been in the newspaper and at the Town Office. Councilor Burton said he would request the NHDOT project manager of the NH 110 project to be in touch within one week with all those who leave their name with Jeff Brillhart.

Leon Sheridan, Berlin, expressed concern about the fair market value of his house if it is taken by eminent domain for the NH 110 project. He explained that the estimates may differ

and he will not be able to find a house in as a town in good condition as present house for the value of his house. He realizes the crossing has to go through his property, but he is concerned about getting another house in town for the same value.

David Morin, Berlin City Council, readdressed the need for NH 16 improvements. He urged the NHDOT not to look at the project from the standpoint of how much money it was going to cost. He explained that NH 16 is an investment in the State's future, not just the North Country. He explained if improvements are not made, people will stop traveling to the North Country and therefore the economy of the State will suffer. He also stated that with the reopening of the mill, more trucks will be using the road soon and traveling to Maine and other areas. He concluded by pointing out an error in the handout from North Country Council where it says the "Town" of Berlin should be changed to the "City" of Berlin.

Robert Brown, Berlin, said due to the many improvements needed along NH 16 and the potential environmental impacts perhaps it makes sense to relocate NH 16 in its entirety.

One of the attendees asked for the scheduled construction year of the Greene Street overpass and Jeff Brillhart responded that it is scheduled to go to construction in 2004.

James Fortin, Gorham, stated once the Conway Bypass is completed, NH 16 would be a good road from Conway through Jackson. He suggested consideration of a new NH 16 project starting in Jackson and heading five miles north. He also stated there were red listed bridges along NH 302 in the Ten Year Plan scheduled for 2011 that may need to be moved up.

Councilor Burton encouraged the public to submit written comments by end of October to Jeff Brillhart at the NHDOT he closed the public hearing at 9:30 PM.

Submitted by: Stacey Doll, NCC

Noted by: Ram Maddali, Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT

Governor's Advisory Commission
on
Intermodal Transportation (GACIT)
2005-2014 Ten Year Plan Public Hearing

Hudson Town Hall
Planning Zoning Room
12 School Street
October 15, 2003
7:00 PM

AGENDA

1. Executive Councilor – Raymond Wieczorek
 - Welcome and Introductions
2. Regional Planning Commission
 - Regional process
 - Regional priorities
3. NH Department of Transportation
 - Statewide issues
 - Statewide priorities
4. Executive Councilor – Raymond Wieczorek
5. Public Comments
6. Executive Councilor – Raymond Wieczorek
 - Closing Comments
7. Adjourn

Written Comments should be addressed to:

David J. Brillhart, P.E.
Director of Project Development
New Hampshire Department of Transportation
John O. Morton Building, 7 Hazen Drive
P.O. Box 483
Concord, NH 03302-0483

and should be received no later than **October 27, 2003.**

October 21, 2003

Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation
(GACIT)

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

DATE OF HEARING: October 15, 2003
7:00 PM

LOCATION OF HEARING: Hudson Town Hall
12 School Street
Hudson NH 03051

SUBJECT: State's Ten-Year Transportation Improvement Plan

ATTENDEE LIST: Raymond Wieczorek, Executive Councilor
Carol Murray, Commissioner, NHDOT
Jeff Brillhart, Director of Project Development, NHDOT
Alaina Bailey, Chief of Project Programming, NHDOT
Andrew Singelakis, Executive Director, NRPC

See attached list

Executive Councilor Raymond Wieczorek opened the Public Hearing at 7:05 PM and explained that by law the five members of the Executive Council, along with the NHDOT Commissioner form the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT) and are required to hold public hearings to receive comments from the public on the draft Ten Year Plan. Councilor Wieczorek noted that this hearing in Executive Council District 4 is one of the twenty-one public hearings held Statewide before the end of October to gather public input. Councilor Wieczorek continued by stating that on November 19, 2003, the GACIT will meet as a whole on the draft Ten Year Plan so that it can be submitted to the Governor in December and then to the Legislature in January for legislative action by July 1, 2004. Councilor Wieczorek observed that the process of Ten Year Plan update begins all over again in the Fall of 2004. Councilor Wieczorek stated that project costs have increased, but not the amount of funding.

Andrew Singelakis, Executive Director, Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) described the role of the planning organizations in creating the long-range and short-range plans. He noted that the process started from the bottom up: studies are done to define problems, and then are used to define projects. He noted that projects are also solicited from the constituent communities. He noted that the region's major priorities include NH 101, the Hudson-Litchfield study, Broad Street Parkway, Commuter Rail, and other studies. He noted that the best situation is one that involves working with the local officials and uses preventative planning.

Commissioner Carol Murray, NHDOT, noted that the Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) are critical to develop the Ten Year Plan. She noted that RPCs are a good conduit of public opinion and she appreciates their work. Commissioner Murray said that the Ten Year Plan process is particularly difficult this time because there are more needs than available funding. To address the situation, the NHDOT updated cost estimates for all projects in the existing Ten Year Plan. Commissioner Murray noted that estimates increased. In addition, the funding anticipated in the last update of the Ten Year Plan was overestimated. Commissioner Murray explained that for the year 2005 alone, the last update anticipated \$15 million more than what is now expected. Commissioner Murray noted that for this update, more conservative projections are proposed based on the latest information out of Washington regarding federal reauthorization. Commissioner Murray said that there must be an emphasis on preservation of the existing transportation system. Commissioner Murray noted that the NHDOT is developing a prioritized list of problem bridges. In addition, the NHDOT is identifying intersections that need improvements. She stated that these public sessions are very important, so the public can express their concerns.

Councilor Wieczorek then opened up the public hearing for questions and comments.

Chief Evan Haglund, Pelham Police Department, handed out a map of the intersection of NH 111A/Main Street/Nashua Road/Old Bridge Street in Pelham. He noted that this is the worst intersection in town, with 20 accidents per year, from 1999 to 2002. He stated that he believes there were probably three times as many near misses as actual accidents. He noted that this safety issue is of great concern to the citizens of Pelham. He asked to have this project included in the Ten Year Plan. He thought that two signals would be the best alternative for this intersection. He noted that Southern New Hampshire is rapidly growing, as is vehicle usage. He pointed out that the roads are overburdened as it is now.

Dan Dube, Hudson, stated that in the last year to year and a half, 150 new homes have been built in Hudson. He stated that NHDOT should forget the Circumferential, but the region desperately needs a second bridge over the Merrimack River. He noted that as a short term measure many years ago Lowell, MA put in a Bailey bridge to address a crossing problem. Though the bridge was considered a short-term solution, it has been in place for 25 years. He suggested the NHDOT may consider a similar approach for this region.

Jean-Guy Bergeron, Pelham, suggested that the situation at the intersection of NH 111A/Main Street/Nashua Road/Old Bridge Street should be reviewed. He asked for serious consideration to add this project to the Ten Year Plan before a fatal accident occurs at this intersection.

Howard Dilworth Jr., Hudson, asked for the Circumferential Project to be put back into the Ten Year Plan. He noted that he had asked to have the project in the Plan in the last round, and it was added at the end of the process. He stated that there is a desperate need for another river crossing. He noted that even though a new river crossing is constructed with the Airport access road, it does not help this area.

Hal Lynde, Chair, Pelham Board of Selectmen, noted that the Pelham Center intersection has five roads coming into the intersection and has had a lot of accidents. He noted that the Town of Pelham is rapidly growing and there is a lot of pass through traffic going to Salem

or Lowell. He mentioned that the I-93 widening project could create problems as people avoid the interstate during construction. He stated that in order to decide the best approach for solving the intersection problem, the Town had hired a consultant. The consultant concluded the intersection was in failure. Possible alternatives are a roundabout (which would improve the intersection to a LOS B rating) or traffic lights (which would make it a LOS C rating). He stated that Pelham was due approximately \$160,000 in federal urban funds, and he asked that this \$160,000 be moved into Ten Year Plan for this project.

Greg Lepine, Litchfield Zoning Board, stated that he had the same concern about the Circumferential as Mr. Lynde. He noted that though there would be a river crossing at the Airport Access road, it is north of this area. He noted that Litchfield had set up commercial and industrial zoning based on the Circumferential being built. He asked NHDOT to address this, even if the solution is a temporary bridge. He stated that the condition of I-93 is deplorable, since that work has been delayed. He noted that there used to be a noticeable difference in the quality of I-93 in Massachusetts and I-93 in New Hampshire. Now there is little difference. He said that there was a location where the damaged guardrails had been marked with cones, but rail has not been replaced. He noted that there are delays everyday on our overloaded system. He also noted that some of the State's transportation financial problems could be alleviated with bonding. (He knew that the NHDOT is looking at bonding, but was waiting for State Treasurer's analysis). Commissioner Murray noted that the current price of the I-93 widening is now \$420 million, and New Hampshire receives approximately \$130 million per year in Federal aid. She described GARVEE bonds as a mechanism to get the I-93 project done, while also allowing other projects to come into the plan. She stated that, while she is not a fan of bonded money, it could mean that the final I-93 project might advertise in 2008 rather than the current 2014 date. She noted that the NHDOT has been asked to bring back more information to the House Public Works subcommittee at their November 5, 2003 meeting. Mr. Lepine stated that bonding would not happen right away, and that the road must still be maintained.

Sean Sullivan, Hudson, noted that there were six projects in Hudson in the draft Ten Year Plan, and he is supportive of those projects. He noted that Mr. Singelakis did much work to get these projects in the plan. He encouraged NHDOT to respect the schedule of these projects. He noted that Hudson has averaged approximately 100 building permits per year, for the last 1½ years, one-third of which were for new construction. He noted that new construction leads to more children, more traffic, and more strain on our infrastructure. He noted that the NH 102/Robinson Road/West Road project would have a reduced construction cost due to donations and private contributions. Commissioner Murray stated that the town contribution is a great help. Mr. Sullivan also noted that the one-way experiment at the Hampton tollbooth on weekends works well.

NH Representative John Gibson, Merrimack, noted that he had received 87 phone calls to support the Circumferential project or at least a scaled down version of this project. He stated that as he drives NH 3A he is aware that it is no longer a farm road, but a road with major safety issues. He stated that local officials say that a new bridge over the river will help relieve traffic congestion and help economic growth.

Richard Maddox, Hudson, stated that people stop in Hudson, on their way from Massachusetts to New Hampshire. He noted that the Circumferential project has been

around since 1958, and should have already been constructed. He urged people not to wait for an all or nothing alternative. He requested NHDOT to do some interim project. He noted that at the intersection of NH 102 and Elm Avenue, a \$50,000 project could make a difference and increase capacity.

NH Senator Robert Clegg, Hudson, stated that Hudson was in need of relief. He noted that this area was the gateway to Nashua. He suggested that if NHDOT phases the Circumferential, they should do the bridge first. He stated that doing this project would make a great difference in the area. He noted that Senator Martell supports the bridge too. He also noted that Senator Morse stated that the Pelham intersection was a tough intersection, as was the Robin Road/West Road intersection. Senator Clegg stated that the I-93 project is of concern because it uses great amounts of Federal funds. He stated that he supports using GARVEE bonds. He noted that finishing I-93 earlier could create an economic boom. He also noted that if the project takes longer, environmental laws could change, and could make the project more difficult. He thought the North Country roads were in good condition. He noted that southern New Hampshire towns pay more in gas tax and tolls, and as a result, the southern sections should get more projects. He thought that travel from Manchester to Hudson is very difficult, especially for emergency vehicles. He thought that the southern tier's transportation needs are too neglected. Councilor Wieczorek stated that he thought that the intersection in Pelham and the Circumferential projects are both needed.

Councilor Wieczorek adjourned the Public Hearing at 8:30 PM by saying that comments and written testimony could be mailed, or emailed, to Jeff Brillhart NHDOT by October 27.

Submitted by: Alaina Bailey, NHDOT

Noted by: Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT

Governor's Advisory Commission
on
Intermodal Transportation (GACIT)
2005-2014 Ten Year Plan Public Hearing

Hood Middle School Library
5 Hood Road
Derry, NH
October 16, 2003
7:00 PM

AGENDA

1. Executive Councilor – Raymond Wieczorek
 - Welcome and Introductions
2. Regional Planning Commission
 - Regional process
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3. NH Department of Transportation
 - Statewide issues
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 - Closing Comments
7. Adjourn

Written Comments should be addressed to:

David J. Brillhart, P.E.
Director of Project Development
New Hampshire Department of Transportation
John O. Morton Building, 7 Hazen Drive
P.O. Box 483
Concord, NH 03302-0483

and should be received no later than **October 27, 2003.**

October 21, 2003

Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation
(GACIT)

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

DATE OF HEARING: October 16, 2003
7:00 PM

LOCATION OF HEARING: Hood Middle School Library
5 Hood Road
Derry, NH

SUBJECT: State's Ten-Year Transportation Improvement Plan

ATTENDEE LIST: Raymond Wieczorek, Executive Councilor
Carol Murray, Commissioner, NHDOT
Jeff Brillhart, Director of Project Development, NHDOT
Moni Sharma, Executive Director, SNHPC

See attached list

Executive Councilor Raymond Wieczorek opened the Public Hearing at 7:06 PM and explained that by law the five members of the Executive Council, along with the NHDOT Commissioner form the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT) and are required to hold public hearings to receive comments from the public on the draft Ten Year Plan. Councilor Wieczorek noted that this hearing in Executive Council District 4 is one of the twenty-one public hearings held Statewide before end of October to gather public input. Councilor Wieczorek continued by stating that on November 19, 2003, the GACIT will meet as a whole on the draft Ten Year Plan so that it can be submitted to the Governor in December and then to the Legislature in January for legislative action by July 1, 2004. Councilor Wieczorek observed the process of Ten Year Plan update begins all over again in the Fall of 2004. Councilor Wieczorek stated that project costs have increased, but not the amount of funding.

Councilor Wieczorek introduced Commissioner Carol Murray and Moni Sharma, Southern NH Planning Commission (SNHPC).

Moni Sharma, Executive Director, SNHPC then described the regional process that began in November with SNHPC contacting all member communities. Because of funding constraints, SNHPC cautioned municipalities to not consider adding new projects to the Plan. As a result, only Bedford and Hooksett requested one new project each. Hooksett requested improvements to US 3/NH 28 in a three-phased approach. Bedford requested a project to improve the NH 101/Hardy Road/Jenkins Road intersection. The first phase of Hooksett US 3 project and the Bedford NH 101/Hardy Road/Jenkins Road project were given equal

priority by the Planning Commission. Mr. Sharma concluded by stating neither project was included in the draft Ten Year Plan between 2005-2014.

Commissioner Murray introduced Jeff Brillhart, William Cass and Pam Mitchell from NHDOT and stated that the Ten Year Plan process is particularly difficult this time because there are more needs than available funding. To address the situation, the NHDOT updated cost estimates for all projects in the existing Ten Year Plan. Commissioner Murray noted that estimates increased. In addition, the funding anticipated in the last update of the Ten Year Plan was overestimated. Commissioner Murray explained that for the year 2005 alone, the last update anticipated \$15 million more than what is now expected. Commissioner Murray noted that for this update, more conservative projections are proposed based on the latest information out of Washington regarding federal reauthorization. Commissioner Murray noted that it was evident there were more projects than could be funded and projects had to be moved out in time. Commissioner Murray said that there must be an emphasis on funding to preserve the existing transportation system. Commissioner Murray noted that the NHDOT is developing a prioritized list of problem bridges. In addition, the NHDOT is identifying intersections that need improvements.

Councilor Wieczorek recognized Frank Guinta representing Congressman Jeb Bradley's office.

Councilor Wieczorek then opened up the public hearing for questions and comments.

Maureen Rose, Derry, spoke in favor of preserving open space land as part of the mitigation for the I-93 project. In particular she favors the Sybiak Farm property.

Roberta Robie, Derry, said that she is a strong advocate for Exit 4A project. Ms. Robie stated that Derry and Londonderry should not be paying for Exit 4A and the project should be funded with federal monies. Ms. Robie suggested earmarked funding for the Exit 4A project. She noted that the Granite Street project in Manchester received earmarked federal funding. Ms. Robie expressed a concern that the improvements proposed for the intersection of Crystal Avenue and Broadway in Derry could attract more truck traffic through the downtown. She also noted concern about diversion of truck traffic along NH 28, when the Windham Weigh Stations on I-93 are open. Ms. Robie suggested using portable weigh scales similar to the ones used by Department of Safety as a means of checking truck weights and deterring diversion. The existing system for catching overweight trucks allows the trucks to bypass I-93 and travel local highways. Ms. Robie said that the GACIT Public Hearing for Derry was not well publicized and suggested that the GACIT Public Hearing should have been scheduled at the Derry Municipal Center where the hearing could have been recorded for cable television.

Sydney Barlow, Derry, expressed concern about the Crystal Avenue/Broadway project. He felt the intersection could be improved with much less construction than currently proposed.

Charlie Banister, Derry, said that he was not informed about the GACIT Public Hearing. Mr. Banister asked about the status of the NH 28/NH 102 project. Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT, responded that it is currently planned for construction in 2006. Mr. Banister expressed concern that the project would adversely affect the Derry downtown and local businesses.

Mr. Banister stated his support for the Exit 4A project and noted that a town the size of Derry warrants two interchanges.

Ken Goduti, Derry, noted that the GACIT Public Hearing for Derry was not well publicized. Mr. Goduti noted that the Derry Town Council has not listened to the public relative to improving the NH 28/NH 102 intersection. Mr. Goduti said that through opening Exit 4A, a lot of the truck traffic through the Town could be avoided. Mr. Goduti noted that the truck traffic through Town is heavier when the Windham weigh stations are open. Mr. Goduti noted that the Derry Town Council was not in attendance at the Public Hearing. Mr. Goduti noted that 4 parking spaces would be lost as part of the Crystal Avenue/Broadway (NH 28/NH 102) improvements.

NH Representative John Gleason, Derry, expressed support for the Exit 4A project and stated that this project would improve travel. He requested the project be advanced in the draft Ten Year Plan.

NH Representative David Hess, Hooksett, requested that the comments on the Crystal Avenue/Broadway and Exit 4A projects be considered. Representative Hess said that the I-93 widening should be expedited as quickly and as frugally as possible. Relative to the US 3 project in Hooksett, north of Alice Avenue, Representative Hess said that US 3 is a major North-South route and the proposed project must be included in the Ten Year Plan. Representative Hess noted that every intersection along this section of US 3 is at a Level of Service (LOS) E or F. Representative Hess said that the Ten Year Plan is not intended to be an implementation plan. In that respect, Representative Hess said that Ten Year Plan can go beyond what is financially doable. Representative Hess said that the amount of federal money is unknown and the Plan is updated every two years. Representative Hess urged the GACIT to look into the future and identify priorities, like the US 3 improvements. Representative Hess noted that the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission (SNHPC) area is getting a disproportionate smaller share of transportation funds for local projects, if we exclude statewide projects like I-93 widening. Representative Hess shared information prepared by SNHPC, which showed the breakdown of funding for the SNHPC area.

Pam Coon, Pam's Barber Shop, stated that she was not notified of the Derry GACIT Public Hearing until very recently. Ms. Coon noted that the Crystal Avenue/Broadway intersection needs improvements, but not to the scale proposed. Ms. Coon said that there is a need for a turning lane to turn onto NH 102. Ms. Coon expressed her concern with the loss of parking spaces. She also expressed concern with trucks avoiding the I-93 weigh stations.

Maureen Rose echoed the concern about truck traffic. She also suggested that the walking trail along the abandoned Manchester–Lawrence Rail Corridor be left as such, noting the abundance of wildlife in the corridor.

Roberta Robie voiced her support for the purchase of the Sybiak Farm property as mitigation for the I-93 widening. She noted that widening of I-93 is needed to address safety. She reemphasized that the NH 28/NH 102 intersection improvements are not a priority as that intersection is not as big a problem as it is portrayed. Improving it will only encourage more truck traffic.

Councilor Wieczorek noted that written comments should be sent to Jeff Brillhart at the NHDOT no later than October 27.

Charlie Banister wanted to know what affect the public comments on the Crystal Avenue/Broadway project will have relative to changing the design or stopping the project. Commissioner Murray noted that the purpose of the GACIT Public Hearing is to plan for long-term improvements. Commissioner Murray said that Councilor Wieczorek is aware of the concerns expressed relative to the intersection project and he will make sure the issues are addressed in a reasonable manner.

Councilor Wieczorek thanked the public for attending the Public Hearing and adjourned around 8:00 PM.

Submitted by: Ram Maddali, NHDOT

Noted by: Bill Cass, Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT

Governor's Advisory Commission
on
Intermodal Transportation (GACIT)
2005-2014 Ten Year Plan Public Hearing

Plymouth Town Hall
(upstairs)
6 Post Office Square
October 17, 2003
9:00 AM

AGENDA

1. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
 - Welcome and Introductions
2. Regional Planning Commission
 - Regional process
 - Regional priorities
3. NH Department of Transportation
 - Statewide issues
 - Statewide priorities
4. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
5. Public Comments
6. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
 - Closing Comments
7. Adjourn

Written Comments should be addressed to:

Jeff Brillhart
Director of Project Development
New Hampshire Department of Transportation
John O. Morton Building, 7 Hazen Drive
P.O. Box 483
Concord, NH 03302-0483

and should be received no later than **October 28, 2003.**

October 28, 2003

Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation
(GACIT)

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

DATE OF HEARING: October 17, 2003
9:00 AM

LOCATION OF HEARING: Plymouth Town Hall
6 Post Office Square
Plymouth, NH

SUBJECT: State's Ten-Year Transportation Improvement Plan

ATTENDEE LIST: Raymond Burton, Executive Councilor
Carol Murray, Commissioner, NHDOT
Jeff Brillhart, Director of Project Development, NHDOT
Alaina Bailey, Chief of Project Programming, NHDOT
Michael King, Executive Director, North Country Council

See Attached List

Executive Councilor Raymond Burton opened the Public Hearing at 9:00 AM and explained that by law the five members of the Executive Council, along with the NHDOT Commissioner, form the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT) and are required to hold public hearings to receive comments from the public on the draft Ten Year Plan. Councilor Burton explained that about a year ago, the regional planning commissions started reviewing and prioritizing projects and sent a prioritized list of projects to the NHDOT. The NHDOT then submitted recommendations to the GACIT committee. Councilor Burton continued by stating that on November 19, 2003, the GACIT will meet as a whole on the draft Ten Year Plan so that it can be submitted to the Governor in December and then to the Legislature in January for legislative action by July 1, 2004.

Councilor Burton noted that there is a 5-month extension to the current Federal Transportation bill in which time Congress will continue to study the new reauthorization bill. Councilor Burton pointed out that at the federal level US Representative Don Young, Chairman of the House Transportation Committee, is advocating for a gas tax increase of about 5 cents. Though 18 cents of every gallon goes into the Highway Trust Fund, only 65 cents of every dollar of this fund gets used on highways. Councilor Burton noted that at the State level the last gas tax increase was about 15 years ago. That increase passed due in part to support of the Towns and Cities, who in turn, received a share of the collected money. Councilor Burton stated that he is in favor of a gas tax increase for the State. Councilor Burton reviewed the distribution of gas tax revenues to various state agencies and noted that out of the \$232 million raised from New Hampshire's gas tax, about \$82 million is transferred to other agencies, leaving \$150 million to use for maintaining and upgrading roads. Councilor Burton explained that the trucking

companies are currently suing the State of New Hampshire claiming the gas tax must be spent on highways and that the funds should not go to other agencies or other transportation modes. He noted that all the Congressional Representatives were invited to the GACIT hearings, and expressed gratitude to them for their work in obtaining additional funds for transportation.

Michael King, Executive Director, North Country Council (NCC) handed out a summary sheet of the tasks conducted by NCC and noted that the NCC's major role is in Transportation planning, facilitating public outreach, and receiving public input. He noted that the Ten Year Plan cycle started a year ago. When NCC learned of the current Ten Year Plan's financial situation, Mr. King frequently met with the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) and asked them not to add projects. The TAC looked at current projects and prioritized projects in the region. He noted that there are 51 communities in their region with 140 projects in the current Ten Year Plan that were reviewed. The TAC recommended their top six projects to the NHDOT for consideration. He noted that this process is ongoing, and that he supports the process.

Commissioner Carol Murray, NHDOT, said that public input is a key element of the Ten Year Plan update process. Commissioner Murray explained that the Ten Year Plan process is particularly difficult this time because there are more needs than available funding. To address the situation, the NHDOT updated cost estimates for all the projects in the existing Ten Year Plan. Commissioner Murray noted that estimates increased. In addition, the current funding available has been less than what was projected in the last update of the Ten Year Plan. Commissioner Murray noted that for this update, more conservative federal funding estimates are proposed based on the latest information out of Washington regarding federal reauthorization. Commissioner Murray explained that for the year 2005 alone, the last update anticipated \$15 million more than what is now expected. She said that through the last three reauthorizations New Hampshire received more money than we sent to Washington, and she hoped that this would continue. Commissioner Murray said that our roads are safe, but there is much that needs to be done. She complimented the Districts who are holding the system together. She stated that there is a need to balance preservation of the system with upgrades. She pointed out that the Ten Year Plan process works and creates a stable plan. She said that the key in doing the update is the help of the regional planning commission (RPC) and the communication back to communities. Commissioner Murray noted that the NHDOT is developing a prioritized list of problem bridges. In addition, the NHDOT is identifying intersections that need improvements.

Sally Davis, Thornton, asked US Senator John Sununu's staff about project priorities. She stated that it was her point of view, as well as others, that if we have to prioritize projects, she would prefer to spend funding on things other than moving rocks and trees away from the roads. She stated that this type of work has changed the look of New Hampshire between Plymouth and Campton. She said that after the construction, the road looks barren. She noted that while the speed limit in Franconia Notch is 45 mph, most of the vehicles are speeding. She asked that if people are ignoring the speed limit sign, then maybe the sign should be taken down. She noted that in the creation of a Master Plan in Thornton, there was a huge effort to get a park and ride in the area. She pointed out that there are no park and rides north of Meredith. She stated that it appears that no one is familiar with the park and rides, the destinations, or how to share rides.

Bill Houle, Plymouth, welcomed Councilor Burton to Plymouth, and stated that as representative for Plymouth to the Regional Planning Commission, the NHDOT has been good to Plymouth, particularly with traffic issues. He noted that Plymouth appreciates this cooperation and NHDOT's willingness to help the town. He stated that he was satisfied with the outcome of latest review process and priorities. He did note that Plymouth has more needs, such as North Main Street between NH 175A and NH 26. He mentioned that they had developed two projects last year. The first is a horizontal and vertical improvement to the road alignment in the area of the armory, the site chosen for their new Safety Building. He noted that construction was planned to begin in about 3 years, so that adds to the urgency to fix the area, especially with all the emergency vehicles which will be using the area. He hoped that fixing this area will lead to better response time from the town's departments. The second project that he mentioned was the intersection of Foster Street and US 3, opposite the Exit 26 ramp. He noted that there was a rail crossing at that location and an increase in traffic due to the Common Man Restaurant. He stated that the developer did improve the situation, but there are safety conflicts with the current alignment. He stated that his first priority, which was also the least costly, is the area by the armory. He urged Mark Morrill, NHDOT District 3 Engineer, to look at ways to address this project within 3-4 years. Mr. Houle noted that Plymouth is the hub of the region, with increasing traffic. He noted that NHDOT had chosen Plymouth as a good site for a park and ride. He suggested that near Exit 26, there is land that would be good for this purpose. He mentioned that he had talked to the owner of this land, who would be happy to talk to NHDOT about a park and ride.

NH Representative John Alger thanked Commissioner Murray for the Rumney Stinson Lake Road project and for fixing the bridge over Rumney Lake. He then handed out a map that outlined areas in need of work. He noted that red lines signified that major work was required, and noted that Dorchester contained red lines. He noted that NHDOT always does skim coating on the roads in that area and hopes for that to continue. He commented that the Warren-Wentworth bridge was very dangerous, and should be fixed. He noted that a friend of his was killed there, as well as others. He asked for a skim coat or road repair from the bridge to the village. He asked for the current schedule of the NH 25 project that was previously scheduled for 2005. He noted that NH 25 south of NH 25A is a narrow road with much potential for accidents. He noted that a widening project would be difficult because there are many constraints there, but the road is in need of widening. He asked that the east side of the road and a portion of NH 25-C be straightened out. He noted that NH 25-C form an acute angle with NH 25, and many big trucks use this intersection. He stated that land was available to help fix this intersection. He asked to have a flashing light at the fire department at the Wentworth Commons. He noted that there were ongoing discussions between Bill Lambert, NHDOT Traffic Administrator, and the Selectmen.

June Hammond-Rowan, Plymouth Community Planner, asked if the NHDOT could fix the northern part of North Main Street by Exit 26. The estimated cost is \$325,000. She noted that development patterns have been rapidly changing, even in the time since March when Town officials were submitting projects. She noted that the knob at the Armory site restricts sight distance. The town hired a Consultant who estimated it would cost \$210,000 to improve this situation. The Town looked into the possibility of making this a Betterment project, but was unsuccessful. For this reason, she asked reconsideration of adding the project to the Ten Year Plan. She suggested that Commissioner Murray and Director Brillhart review Exit 26 for a park and ride, and noted that there was state owned land, which could be used for the site. She

suggested the possibility of shared parking, which could benefit commuters during the day and the Common Man Restaurant at night. She expressed appreciation for the NHDOT support to the Town. She encouraged NHDOT to use a \$12,000 grant to look at needs on the southern end of town. She stated that the Town is trying to be proactive, and work with NHDOT.

Commissioner Murray noted that she was familiar with several of these topics. After a meeting two weeks ago, she and Director Brillhart looked at areas Ms. Hammond-Rowan mentioned. Commissioner Murray explained that she had talked to General Blair about using armory property, and he was open to helping with this project. She urged people to maintain communication on these issues. She stated that she would look into the Wentworth flashing light issue and make sure that the NHDOT Traffic Bureau is aware of it. She appreciated Plymouth's partnership effort with NHDOT. Relative to Ms Davis' comments, Commissioner Murray understood the desire to preserve the natural beauty of the areas through which highways pass, but rocks and trees, when too close to the road, can cause a safety issue. She stated that a local Park-n-Ride has potential for success. Commissioner Murray encouraged people to visit the rideshare website and noted that Shelley Winters, the NHDOT Rideshare Coordinator, does a good job trying to connect people to car pools, and encouraging public transportation.

Councilor Burton noted the speed limit through Franconia Notch was based on a Federal court order, which was a part of a compromise reached in order to get the I-93 Franconia Notch project approved. In order to change the speed limit, one would have to either go back to Federal regulators to change the limit or collect enough of the original signers of the order and get them to agree to the change. Commissioner Murray explained that the 45 mph speed limit had been established by the alignment of the road. Councilor Burton said that the area of the NH 25A/NH 25 intersection could be on a list of projects requesting special earmarked funds. He noted that \$500,000 would go a long way for doing work on this road. He commented that he knows that there are historic and cemetery issues, and agreed that people do enjoy stonewalls, historic buildings, and trees.

Representative Alger asked about the Boston–Montreal rail service. Commissioner Murray responded that New Hampshire and Massachusetts have yet to sign on to Phase 2 of the study, while Vermont has. He then asked about the New Hampshire Motor Transport Association lawsuit on the issue of using gas tax revenues for the state match on rail projects. Commissioner Murray stated the NHDOT's position is that providing alternative transportation benefits highways. She explained that it is important to have this ruling so we know what we can do with gas tax dollars. She noted that the easiest and cheapest connection for commuter rail in New Hampshire is through Nashua, which is highly populated. She explained that further study of high-speed rail will be needed, because while the project can be engineered and constructed, there is some question as to whether it is economically feasible. Commissioner Murray said that there is also the question of public support to have a rail line where none has existed for decades.

Steve Epstein, County Economic Committee, called the Ten Year Plan useful reading material. Councilor Burton noted that the hearings are still going and encouraged the public to send comments written/emailed to Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT.

Sally Davis, Thornton, agreed with Commission Murray that trees and rocks/ledge in close proximity to highway should be removed. Commissioner Murray explained that ledge faces often have seams, fractures, and are subject to freeze/thaw cycles. She noted that there were

areas where rockslides can happen, as was the case with the emergency project in Pinkham Notch. She also commented that there is an increased safety factor by keeping a clear zone for a motorist to possibly recover when a vehicle leaves the highway. Guardrail is necessary in some locations, but is more of a hazard than open space. Also, keeping the roadside open to sunshine helps de-ice the roadway surface, allowing for a reduction in salt use.

Paul Soucie, Plymouth Selectman, stated that he supports adding the US 3 project to the Ten Year Plan. He noted that it was important to have access to Interstate 93, and NH 25. He also supported the realignment of the road near the planned safety complex.

John Tucker, Chairman, Plymouth Selectman, echoed Paul Soucie's comments. He noted the knob by the planned safety complex has always been a safety problem, and asked it to be included in the Ten Year Plan. Councilor Burton asked about the status of the NH 25 Access Management Corridor study. Mike King answered that the study was almost done. He noted the study needs to be reviewed by the public to discuss access issues, but the major issue will be the implementation. He stated that there would be one more meeting to review the product of the study and have the public suggest changes. He stated that it was good to do this study, and he was hopeful the study could be well utilized.

Bill Houle thanked the Department for funding the NH 25 study, and noted that the study brought forward good ideas for better access management in the area. He stated that the town wants to make planning documents accessible, to make information available for property owners, and to create a guide for the planning board processing applications. Mr. Houle noted that he had received a petition from people from West Plymouth who use the intersection of Smith Bridge Road and Tenney Mountain Highway relative to the difficulty they experience getting into the flow of traffic on NH 25. He stated that the town is reviewing the petition, and a possible solution is a roundabout for the intersection. He noted that something would have to be done sooner than later, because currently there are long delays.

Representative Alger stated interest in having a study done of NH 25 from Rumney to the west. He noted that Alan Hanscom, NHDOT District 2 Engineer, had come to the Rumney planning board to discuss driveway permit procedures. He mentioned that there was a new procedure to notify local officials when there was a driveway request, which he said is helpful. He noted that getting onto Tenney Mountain highway was difficult. He stated that he was worried that Quincy road is becoming an arterial. He noted that widening the road would involve moving a large rock that no one wants to move. He was worried that the people who climb on this rock would fall onto the road. Mike King mentioned that he met with Rumney Selectmen to encourage their participation in the NH 25 study. He added that North Country Council would apply for additional SPR funds, when this year's round to select corridor studies starts. He hoped to do Phase 2 of the NH 25 study, but noted that the SPR program is competitive.

Commission Murray stated that corridor studies are good, because they help achieve consensus of the local people, and they make people aware about the link between land use and transportation. She noted that Access Management helps to make transportation safer and more effective.

Bill Houle noted that they did invite the Town of Rumney to participate in the NH 25 study, and town representatives did attend a couple of meetings.

Councilor Burton adjourned the Public Hearing at 10:15 AM.

Submitted by: Alaina Bailey, NHDOT

Noted by: Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT

Governor's Advisory Commission
on
Intermodal Transportation (GACIT)
2005-2014 Ten Year Plan Public Hearing

Moultonborough Town Office
6 Holland Street
October 17, 2003
1:00 PM

AGENDA

1. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
 - Welcome and Introductions
2. Regional Planning Commission
 - Regional process
 - Regional priorities
3. NH Department of Transportation
 - Statewide issues
 - Statewide priorities
4. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
5. Public Comments
6. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
 - Closing Comments
7. Adjourn

Written Comments should be addressed to:

Jeff Brillhart
Director of Project Development
New Hampshire Department of Transportation
John O. Morton Building, 7 Hazen Drive
P.O. Box 483
Concord, NH 03302-0483

and should be received no later than **October 28, 2003.**

October 28, 2003

Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation
(GACIT)

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

DATE OF HEARING: October 17, 2003
1:00 PM

LOCATION OF HEARING: Moultonborough Town Office
6 Holland Street
Moultonborough, NH

SUBJECT: State's Ten-Year Transportation Improvement Plan

ATTENDEE LIST: Raymond Burton, Executive Councilor
Carol Murray, Commissioner, NHDOT
Jeff Brillhart, Director of Project Development, NHDOT
Alaina Bailey, Chief of Project Programming, NHDOT
Greg Tansley, Principal Planner, Lakes Region Planning Commission

See Attached List

Executive Councilor Raymond Burton opened the Public Hearing at 1:00 PM and explained that by law the five members of the Executive Council, along with the NHDOT Commissioner form the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT) and are required to hold public hearings to receive comments from the public on the draft Ten Year Plan. Councilor Burton explained that about a year ago, the regional planning commissions started reviewing and prioritizing projects and sent a prioritized list of projects to the NHDOT. The NHDOT then submitted recommendations to the GACIT committee. Councilor Burton continued by stating that on November 19, 2003, the GACIT will meet as a whole on the draft Ten Year Plan so that it can be submitted to the Governor in December and then to the Legislature in January for legislative action by July 1, 2004. Councilor Burton then introduced Governor Craig Benson, who thanked everyone for their good work and noted that as resources are limited it is important to look at the priority of projects and to get local input. Although public input does take time, Governor Benson noted that it makes New Hampshire unique, and expressed his appreciation for the process. Governor Benson then introduced himself to each attendee individually, before thanking the group and departing.

Councilor Burton pointed out that at the federal level US Representative Don Young, Chairman of the House Transportation Committee, is advocating for a gas tax increase of about 5 cents. Though 18 cents of every gallon go into the Highway Trust Fund, only 65 cents of every dollar of this fund get used on highways. Councilor Burton noted that at the state level the last gas tax increase was about 15 years ago. That increase passed, due in part to the support of the Towns and Cities who in turn, received a share of the collected money.

Councilor Burton stated that he is in favor of a gas tax increase for the State. Councilor Burton reviewed the distribution of gas tax revenues to various state agencies and noted that out of the \$232 million raised from New Hampshire's gas tax, about \$82 million is transferred to other agencies, leaving \$150 million to use for maintaining roads, paying the workers, and keeping the roads safe. Councilor Burton explained that the trucking companies are currently suing the State of New Hampshire, claiming that the gas tax must be spent on highways and that the funds should not go to other transportation modes or agencies. He noted that all the Congressional Representatives were invited to the GACIT hearings, and expressed gratitude for their contribution in obtaining additional funds for transportation.

Commissioner Carol Murray, NHDOT, said that public input is a key element of the Ten Year Plan update process. Commissioner Murray explained that the Ten Year Plan process is particularly difficult this time because there are more needs than available funding. To address the situation, the NHDOT updated cost estimates for all the projects in the existing Ten Year Plan. Commissioner Murray noted that estimates increased. In addition, the current funding available has been less than what was projected in the last update of the Ten Year Plan. Commissioner Murray noted that for this update, more conservative federal funding estimates are proposed based on the latest information out of Washington regarding federal reauthorization. Commissioner Murray explained that for the year 2005 alone, the last update anticipated \$15 million more than what is now expected. She said that through the last three reauthorizations New Hampshire received more money than it sent to Washington, and she hoped that this would continue. She said the States of Florida, Texas, Oklahoma, and others are trying to change the distribution formula to get more money for themselves. She stated that in the past the northeast states banded together to keep the financial situation as it is now. Commissioner Murray said that our roads are safe, but there is much that needs to be done. She complimented the Districts who are holding the system together. She noted that there is a need to balance the preservation of the system with upgrades to the system. Commissioner Murray noted that the NHDOT is developing a prioritized list of problem bridges. In addition, the NHDOT is identifying intersections that need improvements.

Greg Tansley, Principal Planner, Lakes Region Planning Commission (LRPC), explained the regional planning commission's (RPC) role in the Ten Year Plan process. He explained that it is a bottom up process, which starts with people in the communities. He explained that every two years, the RPC asks communities for project ideas/proposals to consider in the Ten Year Plan. Then the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), which is composed of local representatives from the region, evaluates and forwards their recommendations to the NHDOT. He noted that approximately one year ago, the NHDOT discussed financial constraints with the RPC. At the NHDOT's request, the LRPC did not actively solicit new projects. Instead, towns were requested to only submit work that was absolutely critical. He noted that the towns respected this request, and no town sent in new projects. Instead, they looked at current Ten Year Plan projects to prioritize them, based on their current needs. He explained that they excluded the Transportation Enhancement (TE) projects from the prioritization process. In all, 18 projects were reviewed. He handed out a list of the projects that had been sent to the NHDOT, and noted that 2.5 projects from the Lakes Region (a Meredith project was broken in half) are proposed to be retained in the Ten Year Plan. Mr. Tansley noted that the LRPC reviewed the phasing of the projects to see if some could be

constructed in phases rather than all at once. For example, they recommended that the Belmont village portion of the NH Route 140 project be upgraded earlier than the rest of the project. Mr. Tansley expressed concern with the Lakes Region having only 2.5 projects programmed by 2014, but he acknowledged that there are financial constraints. His concern also included impacts on the tourism economy, with people going not only to the lakes but to northern points as well. He stated that he was looking at the infrastructure in the region, not just the systems to get people to the region. He expressed the need to come up with a Ten Year Plan process that will work better in the future. He noted that, in the past, there have been poor cost estimates, as well as cost increases every year. He stated that the GACIT hearings are important because they provide input and comments from communities.

Will Powers of Moultonborough explained that the Moultonborough NH 25 project is now proposed to be done in 2015. Mr. Powers asked the reason for the current surveying along the road. Mark Morrill, NHDOT District 3 Engineer, said that minor improvements for improving sight distance near the new safety building and providing a left turn lane are planned for the next year. Mr. Powers appreciated that there could be immediate corrections, instead of waiting for the Ten Year Plan. He asked if the country store land acquisition is scheduled for spring. Mr. Morrill said yes. Commissioner Murray noted that we are trying to hold the system together until a project comes through the Ten year Plan.

Councilor Burton noted that comments could also be mailed to Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT.

Chuck Connell, Moultonborough's Town Administrator, noted that the Moultonborough NH 25 project was originally proposed in 1996, and is now scheduled for 2015, which means the project has slipped 20 years. He noted that he has been a part of the process for many years. He understands that there are limited dollars. He suggested that if the local people are not aggressive in pursuing this project, it would be delayed further. He expressed appreciation for the State Aid Highway programs. He noted that Moultonborough did three projects through these programs, which improved the safety of the area. He stated that the central safety station exacerbates NH 25's problems. He noted that due to newer and bigger emergency vehicles, the intersection is now inadequate. He suggested that the NH 109/old NH 109 intersection could not be delayed until 2015. He noted that this area is a safety concern and asked if the State Aid Highway program could be used for a short-term solution until the larger project was completed. He noted that the town of Moultonborough has its next two applications ready for this program. Commissioner Murray explained that the State Aid Highway program used to be underused, but now more progressive communities, like Moultonborough, are using it. She said that she is happy to hear that they are working with Mark Morrill, and that it is important that the Districts have close contact with the towns.

Jerry Donovan, Moultonborough, stated that he had been a member of TAC since 1994. In his observations, NH 25 used to be adequate when there were smaller trucks, but now, there are more and heavier vehicles using this highway. He noted that NH 25 is a part of the National Highway System (NHS). He stated that highway capacity has not kept pace with this growth. He suggested that one part of the solution is technology, to better manage the highway to improve safety and capacity. He guessed that there would be no way to construct a bypass of NH 25. He stated that NH 11 in Alton and NH 28 from Barnstead to Alton are State roads, and they are also in poor condition.

NH Senator Joe Kenney noted that with limited resources and lack of funding, it is extremely difficult to get projects done. He noted that there is both year round and seasonal population growth. He asked if there was a way to prioritize the sections of the state that are growing. He noted that Moultonborough was one of the places where there is significant growth. He suggested that there is a need to look to our Congressional Delegation when it comes to highway money. He also suggested that we look into a State gas tax increase, and look more at alternative modes of transportation.

Councilor Burton adjourned the Public Hearing around 2:30 PM.

Submitted by: Alaina Bailey, NHDOT

Noted by: Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT

Governor's Advisory Commission
on
Intermodal Transportation (GACIT)
2005-2014 Ten Year Plan Public Hearing

Wolfeboro Library Meeting Room
259 South Main Street
October 17, 2003
3:30 PM

AGENDA

1. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
 - Welcome and Introductions
2. Regional Planning Commission
 - Regional process
 - Regional priorities
3. NH Department of Transportation
 - Statewide issues
 - Statewide priorities
4. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
5. Public Comments
6. Executive Councilor – Raymond Burton
 - Closing Comments
7. Adjourn

Written Comments should be addressed to:

Jeff Brillhart
Director of Project Development
New Hampshire Department of Transportation
John O. Morton Building, 7 Hazen Drive
P.O. Box 483
Concord, NH 03302-0483

and should be received no later than **October 28, 2003.**

November 7, 2003

Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation
(GACIT)

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

DATE OF HEARING: October 17, 2003
3:30 PM

LOCATION OF HEARING: Wolfeboro Public Library
259 South Main Street
Wolfeboro, NH

SUBJECT: State's Ten-Year Transportation Improvement Plan

ATTENDEE LIST: Raymond Burton, Executive Councilor
Carol Murray, Commissioner, NHDOT
Jeff Brillhart, Director of Project Development, NHDOT
Alaina Bailey, Chief of Project Programming, NHDOT
Greg Tansley, Principal Planner, Lakes Region Planning Commission

See Attached List

Executive Councilor Raymond Burton opened the Public Hearing for the Ten Year Plan at 3:30 PM, and explained the Governors Advisory Committee on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT) was set up by law, and is comprised of five Executive Councilors and the NHDOT Commissioner. Mr. Burton explained the two-year cycle starts with the Regional Planning Commission (RPC) gathering requests for all modes of transportation. He said that the RPCs prioritize projects, and then send their recommendations to the NHDOT. The Department reviews recommendations and budgets to create the draft Ten Year Plan. He noted that on November 19, the GACIT committee would convene a meeting at the State House to vote on recommendations to the Ten Year Plan. After this, the plan is sent to the Governor, and then sent to the State Legislature for enactment into law. He stated that on or about July 1, 2004, there should be a new Ten Year Plan, which will encompass the years 2005-2014. Councilor Burton noted that the Chairman of US House of Representative, Public Works Committee is talking about an increase in gas tax ("user fees") on the federal level. Currently, 18 cents of every gallon goes into the Highway Trust fund. Only 65 cents of every dollar of this fund gets used on highways. Councilor Burton noted that at the State level the last gas tax increase was close to 15 years ago, and that had passed due in part to Towns and Cities getting involved and receiving a share of the collected money. Councilor Burton said that it was time to talk about raising the gas tax and that he supports it. He noted that the NHDOT was working with the State Treasurer, and the Legislature regarding the use of GARVEE bonds.

Councilor Burton noted that all the Congressional Representatives were invited to the GACIT hearings, and expressed gratitude for their contribution in obtaining funds for transportation.

Commissioner Murray said that the Ten Year Plan process is particularly difficult this time because there are more needs than available funding. To address the situation, the NHDOT updated cost estimates for all projects in the existing Ten Year Plan. Commissioner Murray noted that estimates increased. In addition, the funding anticipated in the last update of the Ten Year Plan was overestimated. Commissioner Murray explained that for the year 2005 alone, the last update anticipated \$15 million more than what is now expected. She said that through the last three reauthorizations New Hampshire received more money than it sent to Washington, and she hopes that this would continue. She said the States like Oklahoma that get less money than they send to Washington, are trying to change the distribution formula to get more money. She stated that in the past, the Northeast states banded together to keep the financial situation as it is now. Commissioner Murray noted that for this update, more conservative projections are proposed based on the latest information out of Washington regarding federal reauthorization. Commissioner Murray said that there must be an emphasis on funding to preserve the existing transportation system. Commissioner Murray noted that the NHDOT is developing a prioritized list of problem bridges. In addition, the NHDOT is identifying intersections that need improvements.

Greg Tansley, Transportation Planner, Lakes Region Planning Commission (LRPC), explained the RPC role in the Ten Year Plan Process. He explained that it is a bottoms-up process, which starts with people in the communities. He explained that every two years, the RPC asks communities for projects to consider for the Ten Year Plan. Then the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), which is made of local representatives from the region or communities, evaluates and forwards their recommendation to the NHDOT. He noted that approximately one year ago, NHDOT discussed with the RPC the significant financial constraints. At NHDOT's request, the RPC altered its process and did not actively solicit new projects. It asked the towns to only submit such projects if the work was absolutely critical. He noted that the towns respected this request and no town sent in new projects. Instead, they looked at current Ten Year Plan projects to prioritize them. He noted that some projects, due to development, might need to happen sooner, or there may be less need for a project than previously thought. He explained that they excluded Transportation Enhancement projects from the prioritization as well as other projects that didn't fit the prioritization process. In all, 18 projects were reviewed. He then handed out a list of these projects that were sent to NHDOT, and noted that 2 ½ projects (a Meredith project was broken in half), are now proposed to be in the Ten Year Plan. He noted that the TAC looked at large projects and tried to break those into phases such as the NH 140 Belmont project. They asked that the village portion be done first, with the rural areas being of less concern. Mr. Tansley expressed concern with the Lakes region having only 2 ½ projects programmed by 2014, but he acknowledged that there are financial constraints. With people traveling to not only the lakes, but northern points as well, he stated that the infrastructure and the transportation system as whole and how it will support tourism. He expressed the need for all of us to come up with a Ten Year Plan process that works better in the future. He noted that in the past, there have been poor cost estimates, as well as cost increases every year. He stated that the GACIT hearings are important because it provides great input from community leaders.

Councilor Raymond Burton noted that comments could be sent to Jeff Brillhart by November 1st.

Danny Carter, Alton, asked for the schedule of the Barnstead-Alton NH 28 project in the draft Ten Year Plan. He noted that the road is in poor condition and difficult to maintain. Commissioner Murray noted that the project was moved from 2011 to 2012 in the draft plan. She stated that she expects difficulties in the design process, which will need a lot of public input. She said that NHDOT is starting the survey now and will go forward with the preliminary design soon. She noted that there are many environmental issues associated with this project, but it is important to get project started. She suggested that critical areas can be identified and perhaps some smaller critical pieces can be constructed sooner than the big project. Mr. Carter also asked the status of the bridge project at the Alton traffic circle. Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT noted that NHDOT is moving forward with this project, and that there would be some public meetings next spring. The project is scheduled to advertise in 2006. Commissioner Murray noted that the public informational meetings are announced through public notices, while the public hearings are announced to surrounding property owners by certified mail. Jeff Brillhart said that if Mr. Carter left his name and address, he would be notified of the public meetings.

Len Putonen, Alton, asked about the prioritization of projects. He asked how could the NH 28 project north of the circle take priority over the NH 28 Barnstead-Alton project south of the circle, which is now slated for 2012. Commissioner Murray stated that the NHDOT did more work on the northern project than was necessary. She explained that pavement has a life cycle. She noted that the northern section of NH 28 was at that point where it could be restored for a relatively small amount of work. She stated that NHDOT did do more than should have been done given the current financial situation. As to the Barnstead piece of NH 28, she suggested that there is a need to identify critical spots for construction sooner than later. Jeff Brillhart noted that the construction phase of the Barnstead-Alton project was programmed for 2012. Mr. Tansley asked what could be done to move this project up in the plan. Commissioner Murray noted the first step is to show up at meetings like the GACIT hearings, and let your opinions be known to the Executive Councilors.

Jim Washburn, Alton Selectman, expressed concern with NH 11 and NH 28. He noted there have been three meetings to talk about the NH 11 bypass and preferred alternatives. He stated that he would not drive a tractor trailer truck over NH 11 because there are too many driveways. He suggested that any improvements to NH 11 itself would take away from the rural atmosphere of the road. He suggested that now is time to start acquiring properties for the bypass. He stated that this is the same situation for NH 28 south, which he called extremely hazardous. He thought that it is good that it is still in the Ten Year Plan, but it is still too far into the future. He asked if the project could be accelerated. Commissioner Murray expressed that it will be problematic. She also noted that relative to NH 11 it is difficult to do bypasses nowadays. She explained there are many non-governmental groups who will take NHDOT to court over bypass type projects. Councilor Burton noted that the Franconia Notch project took 20 years and federal assistance to attain a compromise. Mr. Washburn stated that Alton and Gilford agree on this project. Commissioner Murray stated that a calming type project could be done. She noted that the road cannot really be widened because there were too many homes close to the road. Mr. Washburn suggested looking at the system from an economic viewpoint. He noted that the area doesn't have a train, and roads are difficult for large trucks, so both the road and rail systems are lacking. Commissioner Murray suggested that, if enough money were available NHDOT could purchase access control along the highway to enhance safety and capacity. She stated that

access management is important to enhance the system. Councilor Burton noted that before the money reaches the NHDOT, much of it is taken for other state government agencies that are vaguely transportation related. He noted that out of the \$232 million raised from New Hampshire's gas tax, about \$82 million is transferred to other agencies, leaving \$150 million to use for maintaining roads and upgrading roads. Councilor Burton explained that the trucking companies are currently suing the State of New Hampshire claiming the gas tax must be spent on highways and that the funds should not go to other modes of transportation or other agencies. He suggested that the truckers are doing us a favor, as a decision will resolve this issue. He encouraged citizens to discuss this with the local legislative leaders.

Dave Knox, Wolfeboro, urged NHDOT to do whatever it could to hurry the work on the Alton circle. He also expressed appreciation for the NHDOT's acknowledgement that the northern section of NH 28 was overly done, when all it required was lesser improvements. Commissioner Murray stated that for a number of years, NHDOT felt it could afford to address all issues in a project area. This led to NHDOT adding in extra features rather than just the basics. She suggested that we have to focus on the real needs of a project. She noted that historically, NHDOT used to say no to additional amenities. She suggested that we might have to start saying no again.

Martin Cornelissen, Alton, also expressed concern about the area north of the traffic circle being over built in relation to the southern part. He expressed frustration when a paving job paves just a few feet down a connecting road or driveway creating a substantial bump for motorists getting onto the main road. He expressed concern that no work is planned for NH 140. Mr. Cornelissen asked for the amount of transportation funds received by Maine and Massachusetts, as compared to New Hampshire. Commissioner Murray noted that we do as well as Maine and Vermont historically, and we do get more gas tax get back than we send to Washington. She noted that some states get back as little as 80 cents per dollar. She explained that Oklahoma now has strong representation in the Congress, which may cause smaller states to get a lesser portion of the gas tax. She expressed hope that we could continue to get back relatively the same amount. Mr. Cornelissen stated his opinion that southern New Hampshire gets more transportation funds than the north. He noted that the north has some bad roads and bridges, and if a road is closed in the north, there are not many options for detours.

Ruth Messier, Alton, stated there is a lot of traffic on NH 140, and a lot of truck traffic on NH 11. She commented that all of this traffic was from tourists. She stated that since the racetrack opened, more people from Maine are coming to Alton, which makes it difficult for her to use her driveway. She noted that there is a sharp corner onto NH 140, but she sees no mention of a NH 140 project in the draft Ten Year Plan. She noted that if the NH 11 widening had been done earlier, trees would not have been as much of a problem and people wouldn't be as close to road as they are now. She stated that NH 140 is now at the same point that NH 11 was in the past. She suggested that at signalized intersections where two lanes taper back to one, drag strips are created with people vying for the lead position. She expressed objection to the amount of money going to southern New Hampshire, and thought that area seemed to get preferential treatment.

Martin Cornelissen questioned why the town is seeing roads that were built twenty years ago being rebuilt, while older roads are not being touched.

Ruth Messier stated that she would do anything to accelerate the NH 28 south project.

Councilor Burton suggested there must be some fiscal constraint practiced with drafting a meaningful and reasonable Ten Year Transportation Plan. He stated that tough decisions will need to be made by those who decide on the plan. He suggested that there may be support to increase the gas tax and suggested people talk to their state representatives.

Mrs. Washburn of Alton noted that there was a new school planned for the Alton Barnstead area along NH 28. She stated that the school buses will be on an unsafe road. She stated that she wouldn't want children walking along NH 28.

Jim Washburn suggested that GACIT tell all the other people wanting projects that their projects can be first, right after NH 28.

There being no more comments, Councilor Burton thanked everyone for coming and adjourned the Public Hearing.

Submitted by: Alaina Bailey, NHDOT

Noted by: Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT

Governor's Advisory Commission
on
Intermodal Transportation (GACIT)
2005-2014 Ten Year Plan Public Hearing

NHDOT – Room 114
7 Hazen Drive
October 20, 2003
7:00 PM

AGENDA

1. Executive Councilor – Peter Spaulding
 - Welcome and Introductions
2. Regional Planning Commission
 - Regional process
 - Regional priorities
3. NH Department of Transportation
 - Statewide issues
 - Statewide priorities
4. Executive Councilor – Peter Spaulding
5. Public Comments
6. Executive Councilor – Peter Spaulding
 - Closing Comments
7. Adjourn

Written Comments should be addressed to:

Jeff Brillhart
Director of Project Development
New Hampshire Department of Transportation
John O. Morton Building, 7 Hazen Drive
P.O. Box 483
Concord, NH 03302-0483

and should be received no later than **October 30, 2003**.

November 10, 2003

Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation
(GACIT)

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

DATE OF HEARING: October 20, 2003
7:00 PM

LOCATION OF HEARING: NHDOT
7 Hazen Drive
Concord, NH

SUBJECT: State's Ten-Year Transportation Improvement Plan

ATTENDEE LIST: Peter Spaulding, Executive Councilor
Carol Murray, Commissioner, NHDOT
Jeff Brillhart, Director of Project Development, NHDOT
Mike Tardiff, Executive Director, CNHRPC

See attached list

Executive Councilor Peter Spaulding opened the Public Hearing at 7:00 PM and explained that by law the five members of the Executive Council, along with the NHDOT Commissioner form the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT) and are required to hold public hearings to receive comments from the public on the draft Ten Year Plan. Councilor Spaulding explained that about a year ago, the regional planning commissions started reviewing and prioritizing projects and sent a prioritized list of projects to the NHDOT. The NHDOT then submitted recommendations to the GACIT committee. With that, Councilor Spaulding introduced Commissioner Carol Murray.

Commissioner Murray said that the Ten Year Plan process is particularly difficult this time because there are more needs than available funding. To address the situation, the NHDOT updated cost estimates for all projects in the existing Ten Year Plan. Commissioner Murray noted that estimates increased. In addition, the funding anticipated in the last update of the Ten Year Plan was overestimated. Commissioner Murray explained that for the year 2005 alone, the last update anticipated \$15 million more than what is now expected. She said that through the last three reauthorizations New Hampshire received more money than it sent to Washington, and she hopes that this would continue. She said the States like Oklahoma that get less money than they send to Washington, are trying to change the distribution formula to get more money. She stated that in the past, the Northeast states banded together to keep the financial situation as it is now. Commissioner Murray noted that for this update, more conservative projections are proposed based on the latest information out of Washington regarding federal reauthorization. Commissioner Murray said that there must be an emphasis on funding to preserve the existing transportation system. Commissioner Murray noted that the NHDOT is developing a prioritized

list of problem bridges. In addition, the NHDOT is identifying intersections that need improvements.

Commissioner Murray also explained that, if I-93 were bonded, money for other projects could be made available.

Councilor Spaulding stated that representatives from the Town of Newbury had contacted him relative to necessary improvements on NH 103A. Councilor Spaulding recognized Chris Collins, representing Senator John Sununu's office.

Michael Tardiff, Executive Director, Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission (CNHRPC), reviewed the regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) update process that CNHRPC had followed beginning in October 2002 with the distribution of project solicitation forms to the Planning Commission's twenty member communities. The CNHRPC Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) had reviewed the projects contained within the existing regional Ten Year Plan as well as the new projects submitted to develop a priority list of projects for consideration by the CNHRPC Commission. Mr. Tardiff said, the project priority list developed by the TAC was approved by the Commission and submitted to NHDOT on May 1. He also noted that he has been involved in the Ten Year Plan update process for a number of years, and the process continues to improve.

Councilor Spaulding opened the hearing for public comment.

Michael Blastos, Mayor of Keene, introduced John Maclean, City Manager and Bill Beauregard, Chairman of the Keene/Swanzey Bypass Citizens Advisory Task Force. Mayor Blastos said that Keene has been working on the Keene-Swanzey project, which has been delayed by a legal battle over the project. Mayor Blastos emphasized the importance of the project to the City of Keene. It is imperative that traffic utilize the bypass as it increases in the region.

Councilor Spaulding stated that he had been one of the Executive Councilors that had reviewed and approved the project and that all members of that committee felt that the project was important. He noted that the new NHDES Commissioner was supportive of the project.

Bill Beauregard said that much of the anticipated growth that was projected during the study has occurred. They are now looking at phase 2 of the Konover development and there are other large scale developments on the horizon. He is concerned about the slippage of funding for the project which is needed and looks forward to address current and future traffic. In summary, the City of Keene is hoping to have the project moved up in the Ten Year Plan.

Carol Murray thanked Mr. Beauregard for his time on the project.

NH Representative Bill Leber, Andover, said that necessary improvements to the East Andover to West Franklin section of NH 11, were in the Ten Year Plan previously, but now appear to have been removed from the Plan. He noted that the old concrete base is in tough shape and that the section had been identified in the Legislative study of NH 11 from the

Vermont to Maine state lines. Representative Leber said that some areas have been improved, while others have not. Representative Leber said that there is a need to preserve the existing system as well as improve the system. He feels that there is a need to address smaller projects, so perhaps the Salem to Manchester project should be slowed down a little. Representative Leber said that if GARVEE bonds were used to fund the Salem to Manchester project, within the next 10 years, it may be a good thing. However, Representative Leber said that he is concerned about the next ten years after that. As he understands the bonding program, there would be annual payments until the final \$30 million payment due in 2024.

Councilor Spaulding noted that it may be possible to bond the difference between the original I-93 estimate and the current project estimate.

Greg Doyon, Franklin City Manager, introduced Brian Sullivan, the City of Franklin's new Public Works Director and stated that he would like to talk about the NH 11 improvement project in Franklin and the potential Franklin to Northfield connector.

Mr. Doyon said that Franklin is poised for significant residential and commercial growth. Webster Valve recently opened a new 24-hour distribution center. There are 300,000 square feet of available space in the Franklin Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district. He further noted that NH 11 is heavily traveled near Webster Lake. In the winter, conditions are very rough. He said the Franklin/Northfield connector could extend between NH 3A in Franklin and Exit 19 on I-93 in Northfield. He also said that the joint Lakes Region Planning Commission/CNHRPC US 3 Corridor Study is looking at the issue of access to I-93, and he feels it will be necessary in the future. Mr. Doyon noted that Franklin and Boscawen have a different view of the future of US 3. Boscawen wants less through traffic, as it is a more rural community, while Franklin wants more traffic as an urban community. He says a new connection to I-93/Exit 19 is a solution for both Boscawen and Franklin, and Franklin's growth trends merit the funding of both projects in the Ten Year Plan.

David Kerr, Barnstead, said that he is the Chairman of the School Board and that NH 28 between Barnstead and Alton covers two Executive Councilor districts. Barnstead - Alton is a small project that requires improvements, especially in light of the growth that will be coming due to the Salem to Manchester widening project. Mr. Kerr noted that the Lakes Region Planning Commission (LRPC) recommended NH 28 as one of the highest regional priorities. The new high school will use the road for direct access. The project has been pushed back to 2012. Mr. Kerr said that the road needs total reconstruction. There are many hazardous intersections, and increased development is affecting the road now. The longer we wait, the more expensive it will be.

Councilor Spaulding asked for the budget of this project and Commissioner Murray responded, that there was \$9 million budgeted for the project. She stated that a number of state representatives had asked NHDOT staff to meet with them. Commissioner Murray said that there are sections of difficult horizontal and vertical alignment along the corridor and there are a number of other constraints such as wetlands. NHDOT staff is doing the necessary survey work now through next summer. Perhaps a phased approach to the improvements can occur. Councilor Spaulding asked if there would be any acquisitions and Commissioner Murray stated there may be. David Kerr noted that an adjoining property owner doesn't know what to do with his property. He would like some answers in the near term.

Eric Anderson, Bow Board of Selectmen, noted his concerns about funding for the NH 3A project. The Town needs to go forward with utility work. Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT said that the NHDOT has hired a consultant and will be looking at interim solutions for the corridor.

Bill Glennie, Bradford, expressed his thanks for including the improvements on NH 114 in Bradford in the future projects list, but hopes there will be consideration for advancing the project as the condition of the road is deteriorating. Safety vehicles have a hard time traversing the road and the new school will be built off of it. He offered the suggestion that perhaps the Salem to Manchester project could involve only a reversible two-lane section to alleviate the need for some of the widening.

Steve Henninger, Concord Assistant City Planner, thanked the NHDOT and CNHRPC staff for their assistance during the TIP update process. Mr. Henninger stated his support for all of the City of Concord's projects, and continued funding for the CNHRPC.

Rhoda Hardy, Boscawen Board of Selectmen, stated that she is from the rural town of Boscawen and it was her impression that officials from Franklin wanted to get from Franklin to I-93 in as short a time as possible through Boscawen. She noted that it is important to slow down traffic through Boscawen along King Street. She then noted the Town's support of the US 4/Goodhue Road intersection improvement project in the Ten Year Plan.

NH Representative Candace Bouchard, Concord, stated that she serves on the Greater Concord Safe Communities Coalition, and thanked NHDOT staff for their assistance. She then commented on the GARVEE bonds issue. She stated that \$140 million in interest equals a 1 penny increase in the gas tax over the life of the bond. She said that some states have no special legislation to utilize GARVEE bonds, while some states have set up specific funds. This is not an easy decision. Representative Bouchard noted that there is new eminent domain legislation that changes the way that abutting property owners negotiate with NHDOT.

Ben Myler stressed support for bicycle paths and pedestrian improvements throughout the state. He stated that these projects not only offer health benefits, but also advertise the State of New Hampshire as a whole.

David Kerr said that NH 28 between Alton and Barnstead would be a good opportunity for a bicycle path.

Representative Bouchard said that US 4 includes a large breakdown lane/bicycle path. She said that she is concerned with the current situation, and would like to see shoulders painted so it is clear that it is a bicycle path/breakdown lane.

Kevin Bradley, Concord, recommends that NHDOT put the 511 System web site on signs so trips can be planned accordingly. Commissioner Murray noted that NHDOT is studying intelligent transportation system technology to include with the widening of I-93.

Bill Glennie noted that NH 3A is a very difficult road for bicyclists and asked that consideration for bicycles be part of the planning process along that route.

Councilor Spaulding states that on November 19, 2003, the GACIT will meet as a whole on the draft Ten Year Plan so that it can be submitted to the Governor in December and then to the Legislature in January for legislative action by July 1, 2004.

Councilor Spaulding adjourned the Public Hearing at about 8:15 PM.

Submitted by: Mike Tardiff, CNHRPC

Noted by Ram Maddali, Ansel Sanborn, Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT

Governor's Advisory Commission
on
Intermodal Transportation (GACIT)
2005-2014 Ten Year Plan Public Hearing

Somersworth High School
Cafetorium
11 Memorial Drive
October 22, 2003
7:00 PM

AGENDA

1. Executive Councilor – Peter Spaulding
 - Welcome and Introductions
2. Regional Planning Commission
 - Regional process
 - Regional priorities
3. NH Department of Transportation
 - Statewide issues
 - Statewide priorities
4. Executive Councilor – Peter Spaulding
5. Public Comments
6. Executive Councilor – Peter Spaulding
 - Closing Comments
7. Adjourn

Written Comments should be addressed to:

Jeff Brillhart
Director of Project Development
New Hampshire Department of Transportation
John O. Morton Building, 7 Hazen Drive
P.O. Box 483
Concord, NH 03302-0483

and should be received no later than **November 3, 2003.**

October 23, 2003

Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation
(GACIT)

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

DATE OF HEARING: October 22, 2003
7:00 PM

LOCATION OF HEARING: Somersworth High School Cafetorium
11 Memorial Drive
Somersworth, NH

SUBJECT: State's Ten-Year Transportation Improvement Plan

ATTENDEE LIST: Peter Spaulding, Executive Councilor
Ruth Griffin, Executive Councilor
Carol Murray, Commissioner, NHDOT
Jeff Brillhart, Director of Project Development, NHDOT
Tim Roache, Transportation Planner, SRPC

See attached list

Executive Councilor Peter Spaulding opened the Public Hearing at 7:06 PM and explained that by law the five members of the Executive Council, along with the NHDOT Commissioner form the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT) and are required to hold public hearings to receive comments from the public on the draft Ten Year Plan. Councilor Spaulding explained that about a year ago, the regional planning commissions started reviewing and prioritizing projects and sent a prioritized list of projects to the NHDOT. The NHDOT then submitted recommendations to the GACIT committee. Councilor Spaulding continued by stating that on November 19, 2003, the GACIT will meet as a whole on the draft Ten Year Plan so that it can be submitted to the Governor in December and then to the Legislature in January for legislative action by July 1, 2004. Councilor Spaulding then recognized Executive Councilor Ruth Griffin in the audience and expressed his appreciation for her participation at the Hearing.

Commissioner Carol Murray thanked Councilor Spaulding and Councilor Griffin and said that this is the first Public Hearing attended by two Executive Councilors. Commissioner Murray said that public input is a key element of the Ten Year Plan update process outlined by Councilor Spaulding. Commissioner Murray noted that there are 21 public hearings Statewide as part of the current update to the Ten Year Plan. Commissioner Murray recognized the Regional Planning Commission (RPC) as the starting point in the Ten Year Plan process and thanked the RPC for their role. Commissioner Murray stated that the Ten Year Plan process is particularly difficult this time because there are more needs than available funding. To address the situation, the NHDOT updated cost estimates for all projects in the existing Ten Year Plan. Commissioner Murray noted that estimates increased.

In addition, the funding anticipated in the last update of the Ten Year Plan was overestimated. Commissioner Murray explained that for the year 2005 alone, the last update anticipated \$15 million more than what is now expected. Commissioner Murray noted that for this update, more conservative funding projections are proposed based on the latest information out of Washington regarding federal reauthorization. Commissioner Murray noted that it was evident there were more projects than could be funded and projects had to be moved out in time. Commissioner Murray said that there must be an emphasis on funding to preserve the existing transportation system. Commissioner Murray noted that the NHDOT is developing a prioritized list of problem bridges. In addition, the NHDOT is identifying intersections that need improvements.

Tim Roache, Transportation Planner, Strafford Regional Planning Commission (SRPC), said that the planning commission solicited new projects from the 36 communities in January. Mr. Roache stated that the planning commission received four new projects and there were 16 projects that had been submitted in the previous round. The Seacoast Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) prioritized the projects and forwarded their recommendations to the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Policy Committee. Mr. Roache noted that out of the twenty projects, sixteen were recommended totaling \$13.5 million. Mr. Roache noted that three projects were not recommended: two on Route 1, and an I-95 noise abatement project. Mr. Roache noted that the Newington-Dover and the widening of Spaulding Turnpike from Exits 12-16 projects address both safety and the economic vitality of the region. Mr. Roache noted the MPO's support for Electronic Tolls and Dover-Rochester bus service.

Councilor Spaulding noted that tolls, state gasoline tax, and federal gasoline tax are important sources of revenue. Councilor Spaulding recognized Sheridan Brown from Senator John Sununu's office, State Senator Dick Green and State Senator Iris Estabrook in the audience.

Councilor Spaulding opened the hearing for public comment.

Doug Elliot, City of Somersworth, said that the City is in support of the Exit 10 project to promote economic development. Mr. Elliott noted that substantial work has already been done on the Exit 10 final Environmental Impact Statement and requested that the project move forward. Mr. Elliot requested that \$4.5 million allocated to upgrade NH 108 be transferred to the Exit 10 project for Preliminary Engineering (PE) and Right-of-Way (ROW) acquisitions.

Kenn Ortmann, City of Rochester, complimented NHDOT on the Ten Year Plan Process, and noted the challenge NHDOT faces to balance the needs. Mr. Ortmann said that the Strafford Square project has been delayed from 2009 to 2012 and 2013. He asked if NHDOT could reimburse the City should the City undertake the improvements before the scheduled date in the Ten Year Plan. Mr. Ortmann supported widening of the Spaulding Turnpike from Exits 12-16 and noted that the corridor is important for Regional and State tourism. Mr. Ortmann expressed concern over re-routing of traffic thru Rochester, during construction. Mr. Ortmann expressed concern about the uncertainty of the Exit 10 project and urged that decisions be made soon. Mr. Ortmann noted that the Rochester Planning Board is working with a developer in the path of the B1B alternative. Uncertainty regarding Exit 10 limits the City's ability to work with the developer.

Councilor Spaulding said that there has been a reduction in toll revenues on I-95, and that is something to be dealt with in the next few weeks. Commissioner Murray said that initial projections show that there could be a loss of about \$1 million over a period of one year because of the one-way toll experiment at the Hampton toll plaza. If one-way tolls become permanent, the southbound plaza would be removed for safety reasons. Commissioner Murray noted that it is estimated to cost about \$3 million to remove the southbound plaza permanently.

NH Representative Roger Berube, Somersworth, expressed strong support for Exit 10 and frustration with the delay in the project. Representative Berube said that Somersworth has less clout than neighbors to the south. Representative Berube said that a decision has to be made whether Exit 10 will be built or not. He requested Councilor Spaulding's support and the support of the Legislature on the Exit 10 project.

William Guilmette, former Somersworth City Councilor, spoke in support of Exit 10 project. Mr. Guilmette said that he was surprised that the NH 108 project is programmed ahead of Exit 10 project. Mr. Guilmette believes that Exit 10 will reduce traffic on NH 108, eliminating the need to make improvements to NH 108. Mr. Guilmette said that he supports Mr. Ortmann's position on Exit 10.

Russell McAllister, Rochester City Manager, spoke in support of Exit 10 and the Strafford Square project. He would like to see NH 108 money re-allocated to Exit 10.

Loretta Anderson, Anderson Computer, discussed one-way tolls and redirection of traffic onto Route 1A in North Hampton. She expressed her strong support of Exit 10 and its impact on economic development.

David McCallister, Rochester, spoke in support of Exit 10. Mr. McCallister noted that improvements to NH 108 would only benefit local travel and not access and egress from the region. Mr. McCallister wanted to know the distribution of state gas tax money. Commissioner Murray offered to send him information regarding the distribution of gas tax dollars. Councilor Spaulding said that there is over \$1 billion in projects programmed in the Ten Year Plan including a number of projects statewide. Commissioner Murray said on the federal side, for every dollar we send to Washington, we receive \$1.06. Commissioner Murray said that larger states, like Oklahoma, have organized effectively and are trying to change the current distribution formulas.

Peter Harrity, Hideout Golf, spoke in support of Exit 10 and said that Exit 10 will provide better access and egress and help his business.

George Jenness, Rochester resident and Exit 10 abutter, wanted a decision made on the Exit 10 project, because the delay has left him in a difficult financial position. Mr. Jenness noted the uncertainties of the project impact his property. Mr. Jenness said that in the Seacoast region, there are a lot of tolls and yet the roads are not in best condition.

Jim McLin, Mayor of Somersworth, spoke in support of Exit 10 project.

Mike Waltman, Somersworth, mentioned the reference to Exit 10 in RSA 237: Section 2. He felt that a delay in Exit 10 goes against legislative intent. Mr. Waltman said that there is a direct negative impact because of the delay. Mr. Waltman said that he supports shifting NH 108 Funds to Exit 10 Right-of-Way (ROW). Mr. Waltman mentioned the impending development.

Robert Gibson, Somersworth, said that NH 108 is not an issue in the area, and in the long term will not solve anything. Mr. Gibson noted the possible Casino development in Maine and said that Exit 10 project needs to go forward for the betterment of State and the Region.

Cynthia Copeland, Executive Director, Strafford Regional Planning Commission (SRPC), said that out of seventy-five projects in the region, twenty-four are being moved or delayed. Ms. Copeland said that Newington-Dover remains a high priority, along with the US 1 Bypass project. Ms. Copeland said that the MPO's supports Coast Bus Service, along with a new Park-n-Ride north of Exit 9. On NH 125 improvements, Ms. Copeland noted that a private developer is completing improvements south of NH 27, but a signal coordination project is still necessary. Ms. Copeland noted the MPO's support of the NH 125/Hunt road project. Ms. Copeland said that Exit 10 is a priority, and would like NHDOT to program funds for Right-of-Way (ROW). Additional priorities include Electronic Toll Collection (ETC), widening of the Spaulding Turnpike Exits 12 thru 16. Ms. Copeland applauded NHDOT's efforts on the Ten Year Plan and said that the process works and needs to continue. Ms. Copeland said that it is critical for NHDOT to develop the Long Range Statewide Transportation Plan (LRSTP), as it provides a forum for future discussion.

NH Senator Dick Green said that he is not happy to hear that the State could be losing toll revenues due to the one-way toll experiment. Senator Green said that he is not in support of NH 108 upgrade and supports the idea of shifting money from the NH 108 project to Exit 10 project. Senator Green noted his concern with the I-93 project taking up all the money. Senator Green said that the Regional Planning Commission represents the regional needs effectively.

NH Senator Iris Estabrook said that the Newington-Dover project is a top priority and urged NHDOT to move forward with this project. Senator Estabrook noted the MPO's recommendation of a Park and Ride, north of Exit 9 and said that she is in support of this Park and Ride.

Representative Berube said that there is an inequity with people paying tolls in the Seacoast and no tolls in some parts of the State. Representative Berube said that the comments made this evening have been said for the last 20 years.

Loretta Anderson said that Exit 10 needs to be done first and NH 108 later. Ms. Anderson said that people traveling from Manchester to Massachusetts should pay tolls. Councilor Spaulding said that it is time to spend toll revenue dollars in the Seacoast area. Ms. Anderson asked why there are there no tolls in Derry. Commissioner Murray explained that the toll system in New Hampshire (unlike Maine) is not a closed system. Consequently there are inequities along the individual toll routes. In addition, the overall system has developed over time and it is something of a patchwork that is not fair or equitable. Unfortunately the toll system and toll rates are very emotional issues that are difficult to address.

Mark Saunders, Somersworth, said that there has been an increase in traffic in Somersworth and that traffic has grown faster in the last four years and as a result there are traffic delays through Exit 9.

Russell McAllister, Rochester City Manager, said that there is an industrial park along US 4 and it may be a good idea to toll US 4 as it comes into the Little Bay Bridges area.

Executive Councilor Ruth Griffin said that there is a GACIT Public Hearing in Portsmouth on Monday.

Councilor Spaulding said that any written comments should be sent to the attention of Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT. Councilor Spaulding noted that the November 19 GACIT Meeting is open to public.

Councilor Spaulding adjourned the Public Hearing at 8:22 PM.

Submitted by: Tim Roache, SRPC

Noted by: Ansel Sanborn, Ram Maddali, Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT

Governor's Advisory Commission
on
Intermodal Transportation (GACIT)
2005-2014 Ten Year Plan Public Hearing

Portsmouth City Hall
1 Junkins Avenue
October 27, 2003
7:00 PM

AGENDA

1. Executive Councilor – Ruth Griffin
 - Welcome and Introductions
2. Regional Planning Commission
 - Regional process
 - Regional priorities
3. NH Department of Transportation
 - Statewide issues
 - Statewide priorities
4. Executive Councilor – Ruth Griffin
5. Public Comments
6. Executive Councilor – Ruth Griffin
 - Closing Comments
7. Adjourn

Written Comments should be addressed to:

Jeff Brillhart
Director of Project Development
New Hampshire Department of Transportation
John O. Morton Building, 7 Hazen Drive
P.O. Box 483
Concord, NH 03302-0483

and should be received no later than **November 6, 2003**.

November 3, 2003

Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation
(GACIT)

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

DATE OF HEARING: October 27, 2003
7:00 PM

LOCATION OF HEARING: Portsmouth City Hall
1 Junkins Avenue
Portsmouth, NH

SUBJECT: State's Ten-Year Transportation Improvement Plan

ATTENDEE LIST: Ruth Griffin, Executive Councilor
Carol Murray, Commissioner, NHDOT
Jeff Brillhart, Director of Project Development, NHDOT
Cliff Sinnott, Executive Director, RPC

See attached list

Executive Councilor Ruth Griffin opened the Public Hearing at 7:00 PM and explained that by law the five members of the Executive Council, along with the NHDOT Commissioner form the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT) and are required to hold public hearings to receive comments from the public on the draft Ten Year Plan. Councilor Griffin introduced Carol Murray, Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT and Cliff Sinnott, RPC. Councilor Griffin recognized Pam Kocher representing Senator John Sununu's office.

Councilor Griffin requested Cliff Sinnott, Executive Director, Rockingham Planning Commission (RPC) to discuss the regional planning process. Mr. Sinnott said that RPC is one of the two Regional Planning Commissions, which make up the Seacoast Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Mr. Sinnott noted that the Seacoast MPO is designated by the State and the individual communities in the region to be responsible for developing and maintaining both a Long Range Transportation Plan and a short-range list of transportation projects (Transportation Improvement Program) for the region. The fundamental purpose of the MPO is to ensure there is adequate input from local communities regarding how federal transportation dollars are to be allocated and spent in the state and in this region. Mr. Sinnott noted that the process that the MPO used to develop its Long Range Plan (LRP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) dovetails with the State's Ten Year Plan, pursuant to state law RSA 228:99, which requires each planning commission to submit a list of regional transportation improvement priorities every two years. Mr. Sinnott said that this submittal begins a chain of steps and events, which ultimately leads to the adoption of a new Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan every 2 years. Tonight's hearing is one of those events. Mr. Sinnott said that the NHDOT reviewed all of the nine regional planning recommendations, representing local and regional priorities, combined them with their own

recommendations, representing statewide interests, and have produced the draft Ten Year Plan.

Mr. Sinnott noted that the local process involves three parts: staff, technical and policy committee. Mr. Sinnott said that last January, the MPO solicited projects from 36 communities and numerous other entities that have an interest or role in transportation (COAST, PDA, Wildcat, CAP; Human Service agencies). In this solicitation, the communities were made aware of the fiscal situation, that it would be difficult to add new projects to the Ten Year Plan. Nevertheless, Mr. Sinnott said that the MPO was interested in knowing what their priorities are, and especially asked the communities to verify whether or not projects submitted in previous years were still a priority. Mr. Sinnott said that they reviewed the Long Range Plan and projects that were in the later years of the Ten Year Plan, in developing the list of priorities. Projects were evaluated by Staff and prioritized by the MPO Technical Advisory Committee in April 2003. Seacoast MPO Policy Committee approved final project prioritization at the April 24, 2003 meeting and this information was submitted to NHDOT for consideration in the draft Ten Year Plan. Mr. Sinnott noted that there were 16 new projects prioritized by the MPO at a total cost of approximately \$13.5 million. The criteria used to prioritize projects were based generally on safety, security, congestion, economic development and alternative transportation. Mr. Sinnott said that the MPO also kept the air quality conformity status and the issue of coordinating land use and transportation, in mind while reviewing the priorities. Mr. Sinnott said at this GACIT hearing the Seacoast MPO has two roles – both as a participant in the process that lead to the draft Ten Year Plan and as a constituent of the Plan.

Commissioner Murray thanked Cliff Sinnott for using safety as a criterion and for his recognition of connection between land use and transportation. Commissioner Murray noted that Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) are critical in developing the State's Ten Year Plan and thanked the RPCs for their continued help. Commissioner Murray said that the Ten Year Plan process is particularly difficult this time because there are more needs than available funding. To address the situation, the NHDOT updated cost estimates for all projects in the existing Ten Year Plan. Commissioner Murray noted that estimates increased. In addition, the funding anticipated in the last update of the Ten Year Plan was overestimated. Commissioner Murray explained that for the year 2005 alone, the last update anticipated \$15 million more than what is now expected. She said that through the last three reauthorizations New Hampshire received more money than it sent to Washington, and she hopes that this would continue. She said the States like Oklahoma that get less money than they send to Washington, are trying to change the distribution formula to get more money. She stated that in the past, the Northeast states banded together to keep the financial situation as it is now. Commissioner Murray noted that for this update, more conservative projections are proposed based on the latest information out of Washington regarding federal reauthorization. Commissioner Murray said that there must be an emphasis on funding to preserve the existing transportation system. Commissioner Murray noted that the NHDOT is developing a prioritized list of problem bridges. In addition, the NHDOT is identifying intersections that need improvements.

Councilor Griffin noted that the \$15 million decrease is significant. Councilor Griffin said that after the twenty-one Public Hearings, on November 19, 2003, the GACIT will meet as a

whole on the draft Ten Year Plan so that it can be submitted to the Governor in December and then to the Legislature in January for legislative action by July 1, 2004.

Councilor Griffin then opened up the public hearing for questions and comments.

Bruce Woodruff, Dover City Planner, said that he recognizes the tough challenge faced by NHDOT and complimented NHDOT for their help in the municipal management program for projects. Mr. Woodruff said that Dover sees the need for Exit 10 as a long-term project. Mr. Woodruff noted that the City is in support of the U3 alternative and feels that existing deficiencies on NH 108 should be addressed prior to constructing the new exit, as existing facilities should be addressed before adding new ones. Mr. Woodruff also raised the issue as to whether or not the new Exit 10 would be a tolled facility. Mr. Woodruff said that Dover submitted a Transportation Enhancement (TE) application for a downtown Pedestrian Rail Link that was ranked #2 by staff but ranked #4 by the Strafford Regional Planning Commission (SRPC) overall. This project will provide an important intermodal connection in the downtown area between the transit station and other areas. Mr. Woodruff said that the City agrees with delays to projects (Project Numbers 12607 and 13490) within its community. Mr. Woodruff said that the Newington-Dover project should not be delayed because of the definite need for this project. Mr. Woodruff said that the proposed express bus service between Exits 6-9 is important to the corridor but needs a park and ride in the Exit 9 area of the Turnpike to be fully successful. Mr. Woodruff suggested that NHDOT investigate using the General Sullivan Bridge as a dedicated bus route to get transit vehicles around the congestion on the bridge. Mr. Woodruff said that Dover supports the use of GARVEE bonds for implementing the I-93 improvements, and early implementation of the EZ-Pass Electronic Toll Collection system on the turnpikes. Bruce Woodruff said that as a Town of Milton representative, the widening of the Dover-Rochester-Somersworth Turnpike (Exit 12-16) is needed as soon as possible. Mr. Woodruff has seen traffic grow from an occasional delay on Friday evenings, to significant delays every day.

Earl Rinker, Rye Town Administrator, wanted to know why Governor Benson did not award the Rye Foye's Corner project contract for construction. Mr. Rinker said that he couldn't understand how a project could be stopped after the NH Legislature has approved the project. There have been significant property impacts/takings for this project resulting in lost tax revenue and the town would like to see it go through. Flooding in the intersection area continues to be a problem, and traffic will continue to increase with improvements at Odiorn Park. Mr. Rinker noted that Rye Selectmen are requesting help to expedite the project.

John Bohenko, Portsmouth City Manager, said that he is concerned about the local and regional impacts of the delays proposed in the Ten Year Plan. Over 20 projects in the Seacoast Region are delayed or removed. Mr. Bohenko said that the project development process needs improvement to minimize cost increases and project delays. Mr. Bohenko did not want the I-93 project to delay important regional projects and recommended using all funding sources including bonding to facilitate this. Mr. Bohenko said that the Newington-Dover project and US 1 Bypass/Portsmouth Traffic Circle projects are connected and need to be coordinated to minimize construction impacts and congestion/safety issues. Mr. Bohenko said that a delay of the Wilson Road to Constitution Avenue improvements on US 1 and the improvements at the intersection of Constitution and US 1 would result in continued diversion of traffic onto roads like Ocean Road and Peverly Hill Road. Mr. Bohenko suggested that the NHDOT should reconsider its policy of not funding the burying of

overhead utilities as an eligible project cost. The New Castle Avenue project in Portsmouth will require the movement of power lines twice to complete the project. Placing them underground would require only moving them once. This work is eligible for funding under Federal Regulations.

Tom Ferrini, City of Portsmouth Economic Development Commission, said that the Newington-Dover Little Bay Bridges project is the single most important project in the region from an economic development perspective. Area businesses are receiving a large number of complaints regarding congestion on that corridor from employees who must traverse it.

Martin Cameron, President of Ocean Road Neighborhood, said that US 1, NH 33 and other roads are being impacted by the diversion of traffic off of I-95 to avoid the northbound toll. Mr. Cameron noted that trucks especially are going around the tolls. Police Departments are seeing increased traffic activity on the side streets. On the positive side, the air quality benefits of decreased congestion at the tolls are important as it reduces the requirement to use fuel-containing MTBE. Mr. Cameron said that he agrees with the importance of Newington-Dover Little Bay Bridge discussed earlier. Mr. Cameron said that Pease Development Authority (PDA) is projecting 6000 new employees in the future and the Newington-Dover improvements need to be in place to address that additional traffic, as there is little or no room for new housing in Portsmouth. Mr. Cameron said that he would like to see other solutions relative to toll issues. Mr. Cameron requested that the Ocean Road project be programmed sooner than later.

Pam Kocher, Senator John Sununu's office, said that the Senator's office participated in all but one of the GACIT Public Hearings. Ms. Kocher said that Commissioner Murray summarized the status of reauthorization very well, and New Hampshire has a very old transportation system. Ms. Kocher said that Senator Sununu will do the best he can for New Hampshire.

Peter Hamelin, President of Greater Portsmouth Chamber of Commerce, said that the Chamber represents around 1000 area businesses and supports many of the projects in the plan for the region. Mr. Hamelin said that based on a survey, 90% of businesses see the congestion/limitations of the Newington-Dover Little Bay Bridges area of the Turnpike as a challenge to the future success of their businesses. Mr. Hamelin noted that the Newington-Dover project (Project# 11238) is important and would like to see those improvements expedited.

John Tabor, Chairman of Greater Portsmouth Chamber of Commerce, does not want to see any further delay in the Newington-Dover project. Mr. Tabor feels that constraints at that location are impacting economic growth in the region as well as safety and congestion. Mr. Tabor noted that existing commuting patterns to jobs in Portsmouth from housing to the north is a growing trend and about 15,000 Strafford County residents commute to Portsmouth area for work. Mr. Tabor said that with a full build out of 12,000 employees, Pease represents great economic development potential for the area and has an impact on housing affordability. Mr. Tabor said that the number of jobs have increased while the housing supply growth has been minimal. The Little Bay Bridges are the connection. Mr. Tabor said

that the Chamber supports the projects in the Ten Year Plan and hopes that Project #11238 will be done sooner than later.

Peter Bresciano, Portsmouth, said that this is his second attempt at getting signage replaced on the US 1 Bypass in Portsmouth. Currently signs direct people to use Woodbury Avenue (instead of the Turnpike) to get to Newington. Also, once off the US 1 Bypass, signage is not available to tell people which direction to go to get to Newington.

NH Representative Elizabeth Shultis, Portsmouth, said that she is concerned with the issue of truck movements through the region. Representative Shultis noted one solution to move traffic seems to be by way of US 1 Bypass. Representative Shultis expressed her support of the Wilson Road, Constitution Road project and expediting the work on US 1 Bypass.

NH Representative Terie Norelli, Portsmouth, said that as a member of the NH House Public Works Committee, she is here to listen to public input.

Dave Walker, Seacoast MPO/Rockingham Planning Commission, said none of the sixteen projects recommended by the Seacoast MPO, are proposed to be added to the 2005 -2014 Ten Year Plan. The MPO believes that the inclusion of the sixteen proposed projects totaling about \$ 13.5 million and each varying in cost from less than \$100,000 to \$5,000,000, are within the range of what the Seacoast MPO region could reasonably expect based on historic and proposed funding levels. Mr. Walker noted that the MPO does not support delaying Newington-Dover Little Bay Bridges widening (11238), due to safety and congestion concerns with the current roadway and bridge configuration. This project has been and continues to remain the region's top priority. Mr. Walker said that the Seacoast MPO does not support the delay of Portsmouth Traffic Circle/US 1 Bypass improvements (Projects 12900 and 13455). These improvements are necessary to process the traffic moving between the Spaulding Turnpike, US 1, Interstate 95, and local streets safely and efficiently. In addition, it is highly important that the construction of these projects be closely coordinated given their proximity and the likelihood of additional congestion and delay resulting from the construction of the improvements. Mr. Walker said that the Seacoast MPO supports the COAST Express Transit Service (Project 13880), programmed in 2006, through the addition of a park and ride project in the Exit 9 area of the Turnpike. Service is dependent upon the availability of a park and ride in the Dover area on the Spaulding Turnpike corridor. Given that the Express Service is scheduled to start in 2006, it is important that project development for a new park and ride facility begin as soon as possible, and that an interim facility be identified for short-term use. Mr. Walker said that NH 125 Improvements in Epping from Brentwood Town Line to NH 87 (Project 13712) were in the Ten Year Plan and are now moved out of the Ten Year Plan. Mr. Walker said that the MPO understands that upgrades to the traffic signal at the intersection of NH 125 and Hedding Road would be completed by the NHDOT as an interim project to facilitate traffic flow on this segment of NH 125. Much of the work that would have been included in this project is currently under construction and being paid for by a large retail development adjacent to the corridor. Mr. Walker said that the MPO agrees with the suggestion by NHDOT District 6 staff on the Rehabilitation of Route 1A bridge over Hampton River in Hampton that this bridge should be considered for replacement rather than rehabilitation of the existing structure. A study of the bridge and surrounding traffic conditions should be undertaken in the short-term to make this determination. Mr. Walker said that in relation to construction of Exit 10 and easterly

connection (Projects 11429 and 11429 B, C & D), upon approval of the preferred alternative by the resource agencies, the MPO requests that a portion of the required right-of-way funds be programmed for this project early in the Ten Year Plan to facilitate its advancement and to preclude development that would make this alternative infeasible or more costly in the future. Mr. Walker said that the Seacoast MPO does not recommend construction of a new bridge and limited access road to realign NH 108 in Newfields and Newmarket.

Mr. Walker said that in regard to the one-way tolling experiment on I-95 at the Hampton Tolls, the MPO recommends that the full analysis results of this experiment be made public and that opportunities for public input be provided prior to re-instating one-way Tolling. Mr. Walker said that the MPO is in support of the concept of bonding I-93 given the information available at this time, provided that the benefits of bonding, in terms of saved time and money, as well as the opportunity to complete other projects, are comparable to the costs of financing the project. Mr. Walker said that the highest priority for the released funds be the restoration of maintenance budgets, and some of the released funds be reserved in future years to form a buffer to offset project cost increases. Mr. Walker requested that remaining released funds be distributed Statewide for restoring projects to original timelines.

Jim Jalbert, C&J Trailways, said that he would like to see the Newington-Dover Little Bay Bridges project fast tracked, as he believes that there are significant benefits to the project. Mr. Jalbert suggested that consideration be given to moving the Dover Tolls south of the Little Bay Bridges, thus removing opportunities for toll diversion. Mr. Jalbert noted the need for a park and ride in Dover near the Turnpike. The downtown transportation center does not serve commuter traffic very well. Mr. Jalbert said that one-way Tolling experiment in Hampton worked well for his service, as the service ran on time to Boston during peak flows. Mr. Jalbert said that there is a reduction in revenue, but savings in emissions and delay far outweigh the costs. Mr. Jalbert suggested reducing the number of park and rides incorporated into the I-93 project from 5 to 3 to reduce financial burdens on state and transit service operators. Mr. Jalbert suggested a way to fund the I-93 improvements might be through one-way tolls on I-93. Mr. Jalbert noted that the federal government lifted the restriction on tolling interstate routes.

George Toscano, Jr., Hampton, said that the improvements at the US 1/ NH 107 intersection were completed at just about the same time as the I-95 one-way tolling went into effect, and could account for some of the increased traffic along US 1.

Matt Mayberry, Dover City Council, suggested one-way tolling at the Dover Tolls to reduce the diversion to Dover Point Road. Mr. Mayberry said revenues lost through the total elimination of Dover Point tolls, could be supplemented by ½ to 1 percent increase in gas tax. Mr. Mayberry said that it is an issue of fairness for the Seacoast. Mr. Mayberry expressed his support for a park and ride at Exit 9 on the Turnpike, as it will help reduce traffic congestion on the Spaulding Turnpike corridor.

Commissioner Murray requested that any written comments be sent to Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT.

Councilor Griffin noted that on October 30, Governor Benson would be having a press conference at the Hampton tolls. Because of safety issues, Commissioner Murray said that

the Hampton tolls will be restored to two ways on November 1 at midnight. Commissioner Murray said that NHDOT will be preparing a detailed report on traffic, the US 1 diversion, and loss in revenue related to the one-way toll experiment. Councilor Griffin said that she heard that there is an increase in traffic on NH 125 in Haverhill, because of one-way tolls.

Councilor Griffin adjourned the Public Hearing at 8:40 PM.

Submitted by: Dave Walker, RPC

Noted by: Ram Maddali, Subramanian Sharma, Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT

Governor's Advisory Commission
on
Intermodal Transportation (GACIT)
2005-2014 Ten Year Plan Public Hearing

Salem High School
Auditorium
44 Geremonty Drive
October 28, 2003
7:00 PM

AGENDA

1. Executive Councilor – Ruth Griffin
 - Welcome and Introductions
2. Regional Planning Commission
 - Regional process
 - Regional priorities
3. NH Department of Transportation
 - Statewide issues
 - Statewide priorities
4. Executive Councilor – Ruth Griffin
5. Public Comments
6. Executive Councilor – Ruth Griffin
 - Closing Comments
7. Adjourn

Written Comments should be addressed to:

Jeff Brillhart
Director of Project Development
New Hampshire Department of Transportation
John O. Morton Building, 7 Hazen Drive
P.O. Box 483
Concord, NH 03302-0483

and should be received no later than **November 7, 2003.**

November 10, 2003

Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation
(GACIT)

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

DATE OF HEARING: October 28, 2003
7:00 PM

LOCATION OF HEARING: Salem High School Auditorium
44 Geremonty Drive
Salem, NH

SUBJECT: State's Ten-Year Transportation Improvement Plan

ATTENDEE LIST: Ruth Griffin, Executive Councilor
Carol Murray, Commissioner, NHDOT
Jeff Brillhart, Director of Project Development, NHDOT
Cliff Sinnott, Executive Director, RPC

See attached list

Executive Councilor Ruth Griffin opened the Public Hearing at 7:00 PM and explained that by law the five members of the Executive Council, along with the NHDOT Commissioner form the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT) and are required to hold public hearings to receive comments from the public on the draft Ten Year Plan. Councilor Griffin introduced Carol Murray, Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT and Cliff Sinnott, RPC.

Councilor Griffin expressed her disappointment in the small turnout and noted that input from Salem is very important to the Ten Year Plan. With that, Councilor Griffin turned over the meeting to Commissioner Carol Murray.

Commissioner Murray explained that regional planning commissions (RPCs) are critical in developing the State's Ten Year Plan and thanked the RPCs for their continued help. Commissioner Murray said that the Ten Year Plan process is particularly difficult this time because there are more needs than available funding. To address the situation, the NHDOT updated cost estimates for all projects in the existing Ten Year Plan. Commissioner Murray noted that estimates increased. In addition, the funding anticipated in the last update of the Ten Year Plan was overestimated. Commissioner Murray explained that for the year 2005 alone, the last update anticipated \$15 million more than what is now expected. Commissioner Murray noted that for this update, more conservative projections are proposed based on the latest information out of Washington regarding federal reauthorization. Commissioner Murray said that there must be an emphasis on funding to preserve the existing transportation system. Commissioner Murray noted that the NHDOT is developing a prioritized list of problem bridges. In addition, the NHDOT is identifying intersections that need improvements.

Councilor Griffin requested Cliff Sinnott, Executive Director, Rockingham Planning Commission (RPC) to discuss the regional planning process. Mr. Sinnott said that Rockingham Planning Commission staffs the Salem-Plaistow-Windham (SPW) Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and is designated by the State and the individual communities in the region to be responsible for developing and maintaining both a Long Range Transportation Plan and a short-range list of transportation projects (Transportation Improvement Program) for the region. The fundamental purpose of the MPO, with regard to transportation, is to ensure there is adequate input from local communities regarding how federal transportation dollars are to be allocated and spent in the state and in this region. Mr. Sinnott noted that the process the MPO used to develop its Long Range Plan (LRP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) dovetails with the State's Ten Year Plan, pursuant to state law RSA 228:99, which requires each planning commission to submit a list of regional transportation improvement priorities every two years. Mr. Sinnott said that this submittal begins a chain of steps, which ultimately leads to the adoption of a new Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan every 2 years. Tonight's hearing is one of those steps. Mr. Sinnott said that the NHDOT reviewed all of the nine regional planning recommendations, representing local and regional priorities, combined them with their own recommendations, representing statewide interests, and have produced the draft Ten Year Plan. Mr. Sinnott noted that the local process involves three groups: staff, technical and policy committee. Mr. Sinnott said that last January, the MPO solicited projects from its 9 communities. In this solicitation, the communities were made aware of the fiscal situation, that it would be difficult to add new projects to the Ten Year Plan. Mr. Sinnott said the MPO also asked the communities to verify whether or not projects submitted in previous years were still a priority. Projects were evaluated by staff and prioritized by the MPO Technical Advisory Committee. After approval by the Salem-Plaistow-Windham MPO Policy Committee, this information was submitted to NHDOT for consideration in the draft Ten Year Plan. Mr. Sinnott noted that there were three Projects prioritized by the MPO at a total cost of approximately \$7.2 million. Mr. Sinnott noted that the three projects are: widening North Broadway, intersection improvements at 125/121A and Hazeltine Avenue in Plaistow, and intersection improvements on Main Street in Salem. Mr. Sinnott said at this GACIT hearing the Salem-Plaistow Windham MPO has two roles – both as a participant in the process that lead to the draft Ten Year Plan and as a constituent of the Plan.

Councilor Griffin said that after the twenty-one Public Hearings, on November 19, 2003, the GACIT will meet as a whole on the draft Ten Year Plan so that it can be submitted to the Governor in December and then to the Legislature in January for legislative action by July 1, 2004.

Councilor Griffin opened the Public Hearing for comments and suggestions and recognized Will Wroblewski representing Senator John Sununu's office.

Mr. Wroblewski said that at the federal level, there is a five-month extension to the Transportation bill that expires February 29, 2004. Mr. Wroblewski noted that traditionally New Hampshire gets more money than it sends to Washington. Mr. Wroblewski said that Senator Sununu will do the best he can for New Hampshire.

Bob Ellis, Salem Planning Board and RPC Commissioner, expressed concern that during the I-93 construction, there will be diversion of traffic onto more local roads as mentioned by Mr. Sinnott. Mr. Ellis asked that the intersections associated with the Salem Depot project be completed prior to major construction beginning at Exit 2.

Cliff Sinnott noted that the RPC had both project specific comments and comments related to the process by which projects are selected and advance through the Ten Year Plan. Mr. Sinnott said that the intersection of NH 97 and NH 28 in Salem ("The Depot Project") is delayed from 2007 to 2011. The timing of this project needs to be coordinated with the I-93 widening. The intersection is the primary barrier to free flow of east-west traffic in town. Completion of this project prior to major construction on I-93 will mitigate congestion that results from traffic diverting off of I-93 to avoid construction tie-ups. Mr. Sinnott said that portions of the NH 125 widening project in Plaistow-Kingston have been delayed from 2007 to 2011, with much of the project moved beyond 2014 and listed under future considerations. The project has been on the Ten Year Plan since the mid-1980s, and delayed repeatedly despite a pledge from NHDOT that it would not be further delayed due to financial constraint. Mr. Sinnott said that the MPO requests that the project be fully funded within the Ten Year Plan, and expedited to the extent possible based on the results of current engineering work.

Mr. Sinnott said that in terms of improvements to the process, the MPO's suggestions are: account for cost inflation when developing project costs for future years; improve the project development process to "raise the bar" such that projects must meet certain requirements prior to advancing through the Ten Year Plan; and ensure funding for small projects. The MPO suggested establishing a set aside program similar to TE/CMAQ under which small projects could be funded and constructed within a timeline of five years or less. The MPO also suggests expanding the pool of federal funds through bonding I-93, increasing the gas tax, or other measures; and establishing a stable source of state funding to match federal funds for transit and other alternative mode projects.

Everett McBride, Salem Selectman, said that I-93 is the economic engine for the state and should be bonded to speed the timeline for construction. Mr. McBride said that during construction, two lanes on I-93 should be open. The NH 111 bypass is important, but I-93 is the top priority project. Mr. McBride said that it has been a long time since I-93 had any improvements.

Peter Griffin, Windham and RPC Commissioner, noted the lack of choice in transportation in New Hampshire. Mr. Griffin said that the transportation system as a whole is the engine for economic development for the state and region, supporting tourism and job creation in all sectors. Mr. Griffin noted the need to develop an adequate funding mechanism for NHDOT, through a gas tax increase or other means. Mr. Griffin said that that economic development pays for everything.

Bob Ellis said there is a lot of work being done in town through private sector funding with impact fees.

Cliff Sinnott stated that the SPW MPO supports bonding provided that benefits, in terms of time and money savings and expediting other projects with released funds, outweigh the cost of financing.

Councilor Griffin asked if New Hampshire bonded other transportation projects. Commissioner Murray said that F. E. Everett Turnpike improvements were bonded. Commissioner Murray indicated that it is necessary to explore innovative financing, which would speed the construction process and gets the facility on line faster.

Peter Griffin asked if tolls could be added to I-93 to generate funds to back the bonds. Commissioner Murray responded that this could be done, but may be politically unacceptable and is not part of the current thinking of GARVEE bonding.

NH Representative Kevin Waterhouse noted that a one-cent increase in the gas tax (that yields about \$6 million), should be pledged towards GARVEE bond payments.

Bob Ellis stated that adding a toll plaza to I-93 at the border would increase diversion of traffic onto NH 28, and would instantly bring back the congestion alleviated through the widening of the highway.

Peter Griffin reiterated that if infrastructure improvements are requested, there is a need to give NHDOT the necessary funds.

Cliff Sinnott noted that the SPW MPO position is the same as suggested by Mr. Griffin. Mr. Sinnott noted that continual delays in projects such as NH 125, which has been delayed in 5 or 6 successive Ten Year Plans, undermine the confidence of communities in the system, and that securing adequate funding to build projects on a reasonable timeline is critical. He reiterated the MPO position on the need for expanded state funding for transportation, incorporated with stricter project selection and budgeting processes described previously.

Councilor Griffin expressed appreciation for the thoughtful input. She requested that any comments/suggestions should be sent to Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT and adjourned the Public Hearing at 8:00 PM.

Submitted by: Scott Bogle, RPC

Noted by: Ram Maddali, Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT

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Governor's Advisory Commission
on
Intermodal Transportation (GACIT)
2005-2014 Ten Year Plan Public Hearing

Plaistow
Vic Geary Center
18 Greenough Road
October 29, 2003
7:00 PM

AGENDA

1. Executive Councilor – Ruth Griffin
 - Welcome and Introductions
2. Regional Planning Commission
 - Regional process
 - Regional priorities
3. NH Department of Transportation
 - Statewide issues
 - Statewide priorities
4. Executive Councilor – Ruth Griffin
5. Public Comments
6. Executive Councilor – Ruth Griffin
 - Closing Comments
7. Adjourn

Written Comments should be addressed to:

Jeff Brillhart
Director of Project Development
New Hampshire Department of Transportation
John O. Morton Building, 7 Hazen Drive
P.O. Box 483
Concord, NH 03302-0483

and should be received no later than **November 10, 2003.**

November 5, 2003

Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation
(GACIT)

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

DATE OF HEARING: October 29, 2003
7:00 PM

LOCATION OF HEARING: Vic Geary Center
18 Greenough Road
Plaistow, NH

SUBJECT: State's Ten-Year Transportation Improvement Plan

ATTENDEE LIST: Ruth Griffin, Executive Councilor
Carol Murray, Commissioner, NHDOT
Jeff Brillhart, Director of Project Development, NHDOT
Scott Bogle, Transportation Planner, RPC

See attached list

Executive Councilor Ruth Griffin opened the Public Hearing at 7:10 PM and explained that by law the five members of the Executive Council, along with the NHDOT Commissioner form the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT) and are required to hold public hearings to receive comments from the public on the draft Ten Year Plan.

Councilor Griffin requested Scott Bogle, Transportation Planner, Rockingham Planning Commission, to discuss the regional planning process. Mr. Bogle said that Rockingham Planning Commission staffs the Salem-Plaistow-Windham Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and is designated by the State and the individual communities in the region to be responsible for developing and maintaining both a Long Range Transportation Plan and a short-range list of transportation projects (Transportation Improvement Program) for the region. The fundamental purpose of the MPO with regard to transportation is to ensure there is adequate input from local communities regarding how federal transportation dollars are to be allocated and spent in the state and in this region. Mr. Bogle noted that the process the MPO used to develop its Long Range Plan (LRP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) dovetails with the State's Ten Year Plan, which requires each planning commission to submit a list of regional transportation improvement priorities every two years. Mr. Bogle said that this submittal begins a chain of steps, which ultimately leads to the adoption of a new Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan every 2 years. Mr. Bogle said that last January, the MPO solicited projects from 9 communities. In this solicitation, the communities were made aware of the fiscal situation, that it would be difficult to add new projects to the Ten Year Plan. Mr. Bogle said the MPO also asked the communities to verify whether or not projects submitted in previous years were still a

priority. Projects were evaluated by staff and prioritized by the MPO Technical Advisory Committee and were approved by the Salem-Plaistow-Windham MPO Policy Committee. This information was submitted to NHDOT for consideration in the draft Ten Year Plan. Mr. Bogle noted that there were three projects prioritized by the MPO at a total cost of \$7.2 million. Mr. Bogle noted that the three projects are: widening North Broadway in Salem from NH 97 to NH 111, intersection improvements at 125/121A and Hazeltine Avenue in Plaistow and Haverhill, MA (details of this project will be finalized soon), and intersection improvements on Main Street in Salem at Bridge/School Streets and Lawrence Road.

Commissioner Murray noted that Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) are critical in developing the State's Ten Year Plan and thanked the RPCs for their continued help. Commissioner Murray said that the Ten Year Plan process is particularly difficult this time because there are more needs than available funding. To address the situation, the NHDOT updated cost estimates for all projects in the existing Ten Year Plan. Commissioner Murray noted that estimates increased. Commissioner Murray noted that for this update, more conservative projections are proposed based on the latest information out of Washington regarding federal reauthorization. She said that through the last three reauthorizations New Hampshire received more money than it sent to Washington, and she hoped that this would continue. She said the States like Oklahoma are trying to change the distribution formula to get more money. In addition, the funding anticipated in the last update of the Ten Year Plan was overestimated. Commissioner Murray explained that for the year 2005 alone, the last update anticipated \$15 million more than what is now expected. Commissioner Murray said that there must be an emphasis on preserving the existing transportation system. Commissioner Murray noted that the NHDOT is developing a prioritized list of problem bridges. In addition, the NHDOT is identifying intersections that need improvements.

Councilor Griffin then opened up the public hearing for questions and comments.

John Englert, Executive Director, Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (NNEPRA), said that New Hampshire has one of the best Ten Year Plan processes. Mr. Englert encouraged intermodal investments for public transportation. Mr. Englert requested that the discussions of the Plaistow rail service be neutral towards Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) and not assume service will be by this provider. Mr. Englert said that the Ten Year Plan does not recognize the Downeaster and requested that Downeaster be discussed in the Ten Year Plan. Even though over 25% of riders are New Hampshire residents, Mr. Englert said, there are no operating grants programmed through the Ten Year Plan. Mr. Englert noted that NNEPRA could encumber the insurance costs and other regional transportation charges for the Downeaster that are currently being underwritten by station communities if operating assistance could be provided by the State of New Hampshire.

Scott Bogle said that the MPO was disappointed that none of the recommended three new projects have been added to the draft Ten Year Plan, but noted few new projects were added to the plan. Also of concern to the MPO were two projects already on the Ten Year Plan that have been delayed in the draft update. Mr. Bogle said that NH 125 Project (Project# 10044B) has been in the Ten Year Plan since the 1980s and has been continuously delayed. Mr. Bogle noted that the draft Ten Year Plan divides construction of this project into several phases, with a major part delayed out of the Ten Year Plan. Mr. Bogle said that at the time

of adoption of the 2003-2005 Transportation Improvement Program, the Salem-Plaistow-Windham MPO Policy Committee stated that it would not approve any further delays of the project for financial constraint reasons. The MPO was assured at that time by NHDOT that there would be no further delay of the project for reasons of financial constraint. For this reason, the MPO finds further delay and cost increases to be unacceptable. Mr. Bogle stated the MPO's request that the project be fully funded within the Ten Year Plan, and that the project move in an expeditious manner consistent with the outcome of the project engineering now underway. Mr. Bogle said that the Depot Road project (Project# 12334) should be completed prior to beginning the I-93 construction. Mr. Bogle said that the project is being delayed from 2007 to 2011, but recognized that right-of-way (ROW) issues may contribute to some of the delay. However, he noted that completion of this project prior to major construction on I-93 would help mitigate congestion on NH 28, which will be exacerbated by traffic diverted from I-93 during construction. Mr. Bogle said construction of a rail platform in Plaistow (Project# 13515) is still scheduled for 2006, but that the likely provider of passenger rail service is NNEPRA rather than the MBTA. NNEPRA has discussed with the MPO the opportunity to add a Plaistow station stop on the Downeaster service.

Scott Bogle said that the MPO also had a number of recommendations related to the Ten Year Plan process. He explained that part of the current fiscal crisis is due to unavoidable cost increases, but that changes to the process by which projects are added to and advanced through the Ten Year Plan might help reduce fiscal constraint issues in the future. He noted that projects get added with vaguely defined scopes, and as the scopes are better defined, the costs increase. Mr. Bogle noted that NHDOT has initiated discussions with MPOs to improve the process. Mr. Bogle said that there is a need to have better accounting; to require projects to have better definition before programming funds; to coordinate with other projects; and to make sure that smaller projects can advance. Mr. Bogle said that over 75% of the projects in the Ten Year Plan can be completed with 10% of the funds. Mr. Bogle said that there is a need to set aside funds for smaller projects, which could be chosen through a statewide competitive process similar to the TE/CMAQ programs. Mr. Bogle said that there is a need to provide additional funding and flexibility. In particular, Mr. Bogle noted the lack of state funding available for transit, which is an increasingly critical need in the SPW region with its growing population. He also stated that the MPO supports bonding the I-93 project provided that bonding is cost effective, and funds made available are used first to preserve the existing system, with the remaining funds used to move projects into the Ten Year Plan.

Merilyn Senter, Selectperson Plaistow, said that the NH 125 widening project has been discussed for over thirty years. Ms. Senter said that the Town is in support of the Depot Road project (Project# 12334) construction being coordinated with the I-93 widening or constructed earlier than I-93 widening. Ms. Senter noted that if Depot Road is not reconstructed prior to I-93 widening, then more people may use NH 125. Ms. Senter said that the Town of Plaistow has a superfund site and the town is in the middle of a Record of Decision (ROD) for the cleanup process for this site. An estimated 50 trail tractor trips per day may be required for a period of 3 months for the cleanup. Ms. Senter requested that if NH 125 widening is phased, the County Road intersection should be done first.

Councilor Griffin recognized Sheridan Brown representing Senator John Sununu's office. Mr. Brown said that he is available to receive public input.

NH Senator Chuck Morse, Salem, agreed with Ms. Senter, that the NH 125 widening project and I-93 are interrelated and neither should be delayed. He also noted that I-93 is top priority in the region. He has been working on the I-93 bonding issue and believes there is support in the Legislature and from the Governor. With bonding he believes I-93 could be done in 6 years. The benefits in terms of a faster construction timeline and cost savings relative to inflation, justify the additional cost of servicing the bonds.

Lesley Hume, Kingston Highway Safety, spoke in support of the NH 125 project and noted that there is lot of support for this project. Ms. Hume said that this is a model project. The feasibility study for this project was completed in 1999 with access management a major component. Ms. Hume said canceling the project would be distressing. Ms. Hume urged that the NH 125 project be put back in the Ten Year Plan with real costs estimated at \$31 million. If construction does not occur, the wrong message would be sent to other communities. Ms. Hume said that all the good planning and engineering would go to waste.

Ellen Faulconer, Kingston Planning Board and NH 125 Advisory Task Force, echoed Ms. Hume's comments in support of the NH 125 project. Ms. Faulconer said that the Town has been doing its share in access management and has a 100-foot setback requirement to not infringe on the widening right-of-way. Ms. Faulconer noted that there are safety issues and this project needs to be put back in the Ten Year Plan. Ms. Faulconer noted that she was 38 years old when she first got involved with the NH 125 project (which was long after its inception), and that she would be 60 before it was built if the delays proposed in the Draft Ten Year Plan are adopted.

Ms. Faulconer read a letter from the NH 125 Advisory Task force, expressing displeasure with the proposed delay of the NH 125 project.

Peter Griffin, Windham, said that transportation is a tool for economic development. Mr. Griffin noted the need to develop an adequate funding mechanism for NHDOT. Mr. Griffin said that money is wasted through traffic delays and there is a need for elected officials to provide adequate funding through the gas tax or other mechanisms to the NHDOT and at the same time, hold the NHDOT accountable.

Tim Moore, Plaistow Area Transit Advisory Committee (PATAC), said that the PATAC was formed to bring rail service to Plaistow, after realizing that one mode of travel will not suffice over the long term. Mr. Moore said that PATAC brought bus service and the Plaistow park and ride to the area, and is now looking at bringing rail to Plaistow through Project # 13515. Mr. Moore noted that he is working with Rockingham Planning Commission on project details, and as the 20% matching details are worked out, the project could be constructed soon. Mr. Moore noted that there is a need for public transportation. Mr. Moore said that the feasibility study for the NH 125 project was completed in 1999 and the project needs to be completed. Mr. Moore expressed his support for funding small projects.

Glenn Coppelman, Kingston Planning Board, said that he is in support of advancing the schedule of Plaistow- Kingston NH 125 project. Mr. Coppelman said that the two towns have followed the process and acted in good faith, only to be faced with multiple delays.

Ellen Faulconer said that when a project is developed, there is always a question of the support from adjacent municipalities. Ms. Faulconer noted that in the case of Kingston and Plaistow, both towns have been working together, and it is very disappointing to hear that this cooperation would not have a bearing on the NH 125 project.

Councilor Griffin requested that written comments be sent to Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT by November 10. Councilor Griffin noted that this is the last of the twenty-one public hearings. Commissioner Murray said on November 19, 2003, at 2:00 PM, the GACIT will meet as a whole on the draft Ten Year Plan so that it can be submitted to the Governor in December and then to the Legislature in January for legislative action by July 1, 2004. Councilor Griffin observed the process of Ten Year Plan update begins all over again in the Fall of 2004.

Glenn Coppelman asked if there would be opportunity for public comment at the November 19 GACIT meeting. Councilor Griffin said that the Commission would decide. Speaking for herself, she would not deny any public input.

Senator Morse asked if there were any common themes at the Public Hearings. Commissioner Murray said that the common themes were growing recognition for transit, support of gas tax increase, and support for bonding I-93.

Peter Griffin asked for Senator Morse's thoughts on increasing the gas tax and tolls. Senator Morse said that he is in support of maintaining tolls and he does not support a gas tax increase. Senator Morse strongly recommended that towns should be consulted on toll issues. Relative to a gas tax, the State must be patient and live within its means. Councilor Griffin wondered if a gas tax increase would be counter to Governor Benson's pledge of no new taxes. Commissioner Murray said that Governor Benson has said that he is not in support of a gas tax increase, but that he is in support bonding of I-93.

Peter Griffin asked Senator Morse if the gas tax increase is unacceptable, where could the funding be found for much needed congestion relief projects. Senator Morse said that he believes that additional funding is not necessarily needed, and that it would not necessarily be well used if it were available. He cited as an example the lack of use of some park and ride lots in the region.

Bob Ellis, Salem, said that if tolls were installed along I-93, there would be impacts on the side roads, because of people trying to avoid tolls. Mr. Ellis said that gas tax increase makes more sense. Senator Morse noted that a 1-cent state gas tax increase only generates \$6 million, which would provide relatively little relief.

Councilor Griffin adjourned the Public Hearing at 8:50 PM.

Submitted by: Ram Maddali, NHDOT

Noted by: Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT